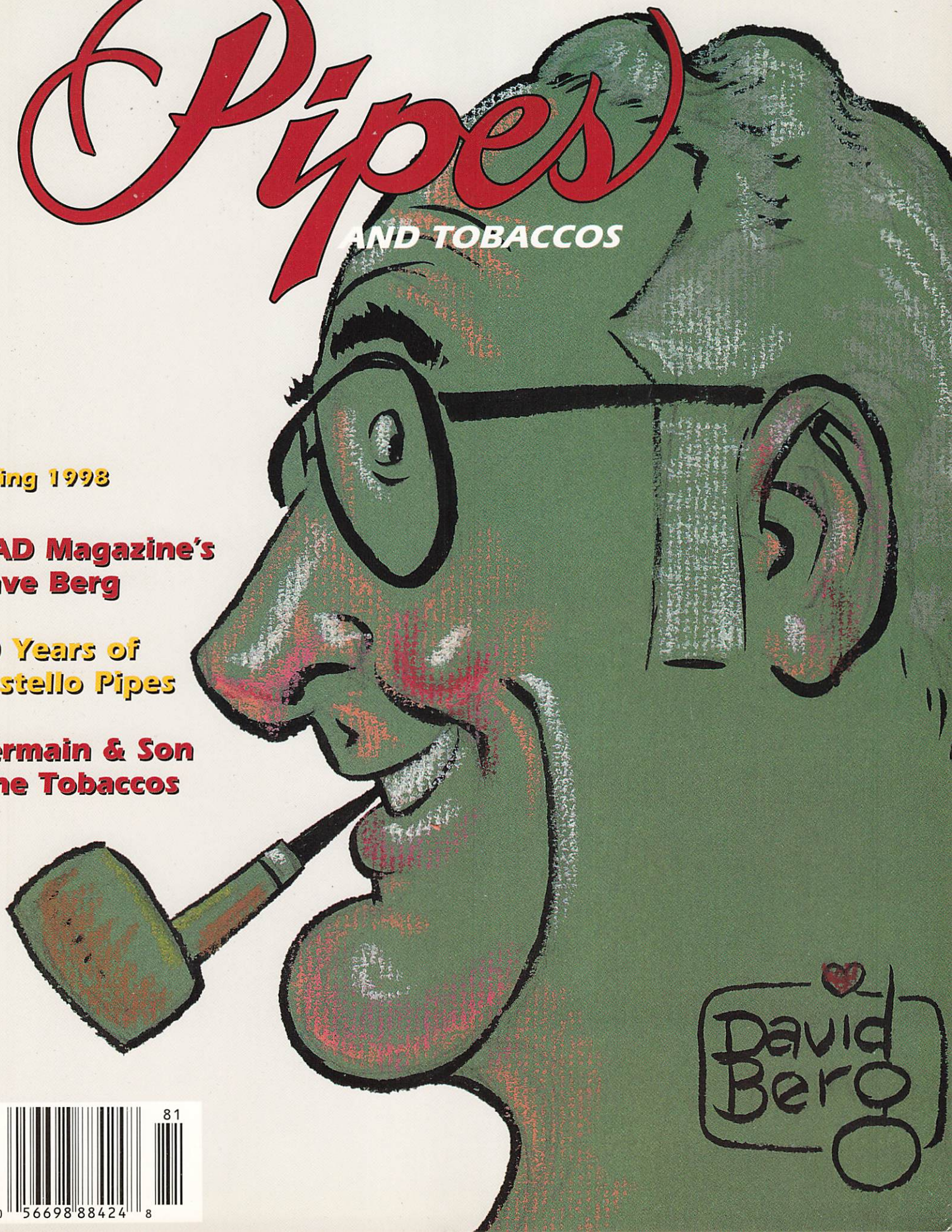
Pipes AND TOBACCOS



Spring 1998

MAD Magazine's Dave Berg

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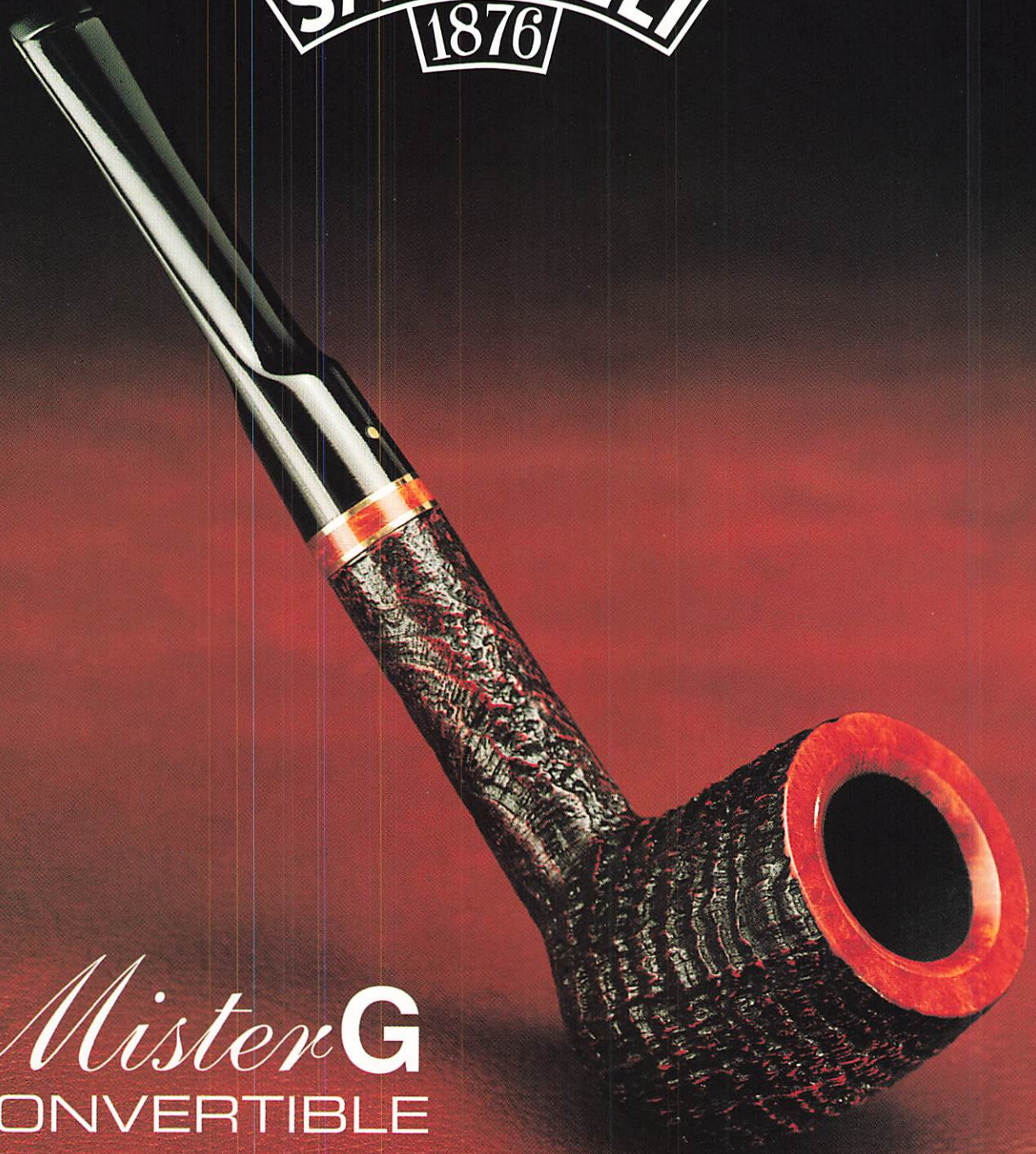

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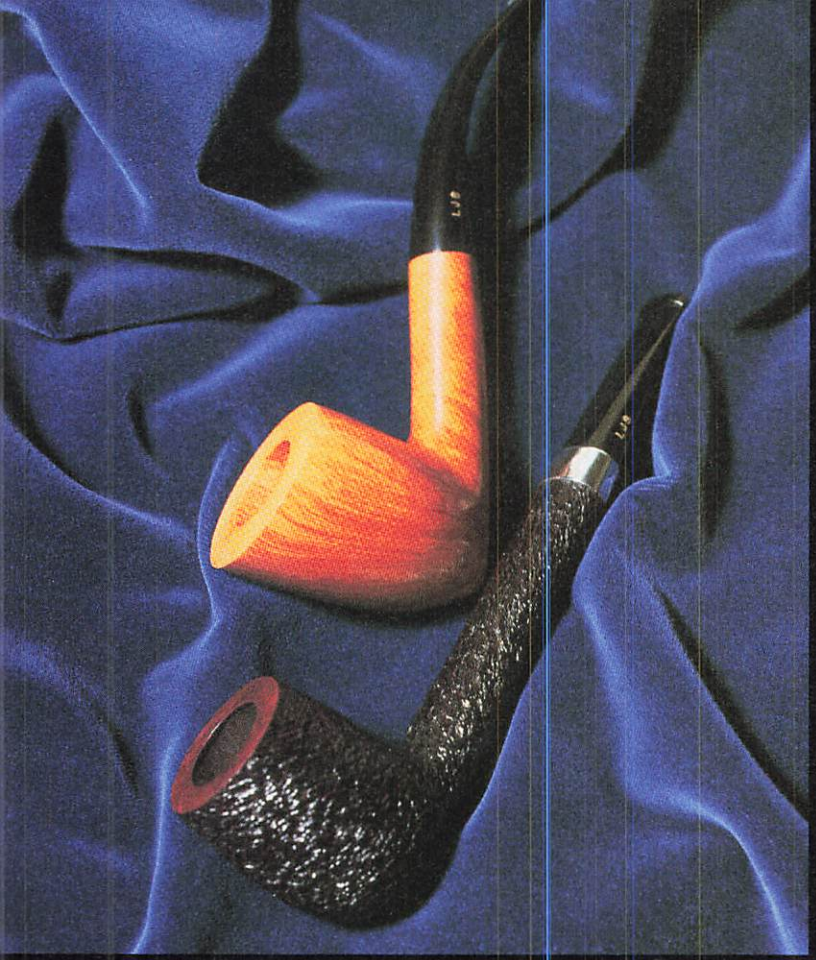

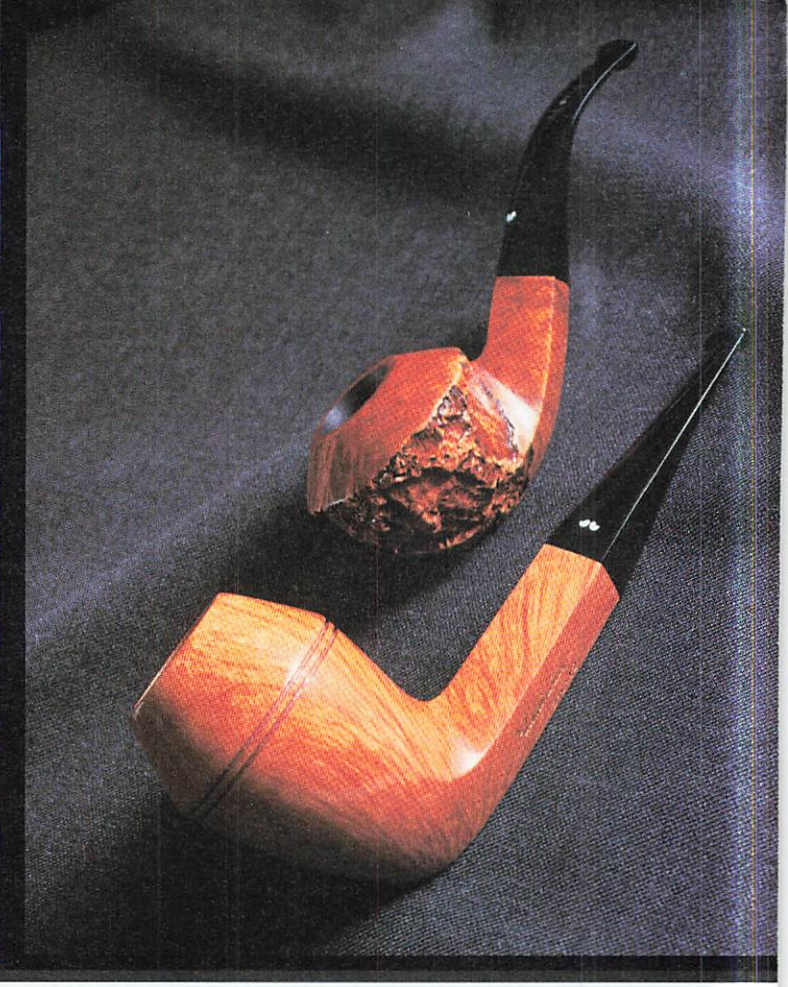

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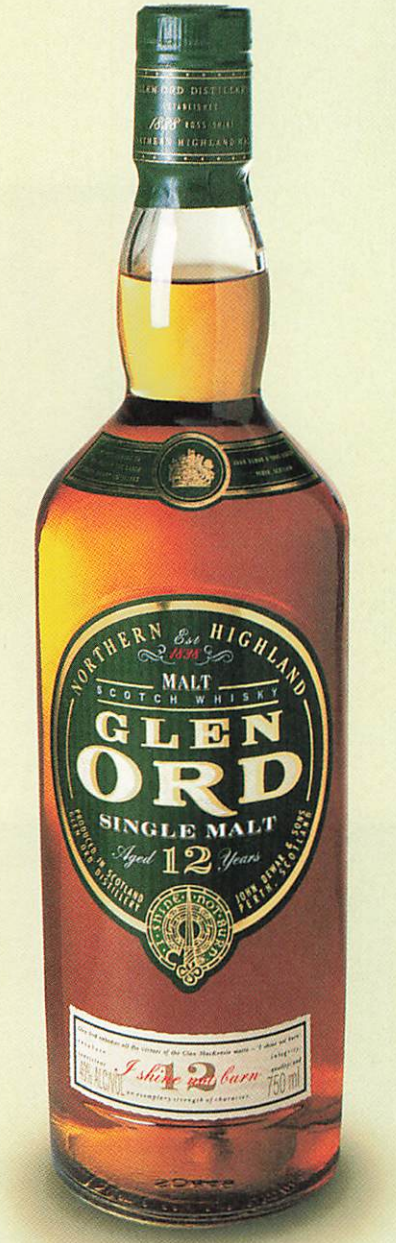

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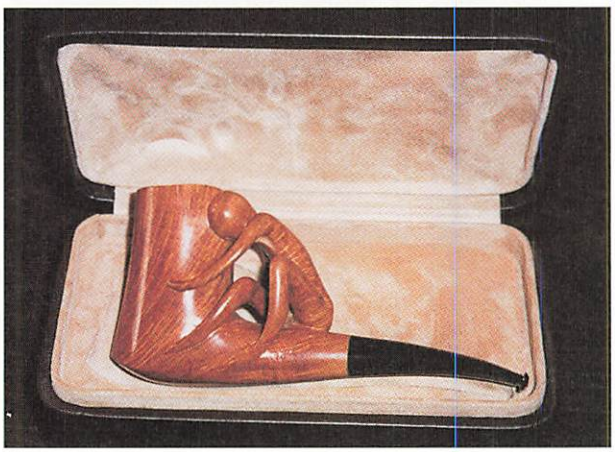

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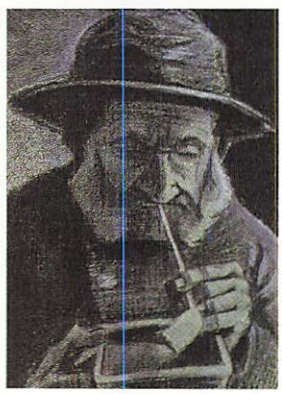

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Vol. 3, No. 1, Spring 1998

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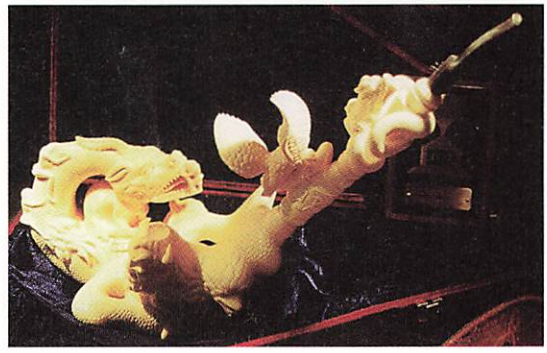

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Cover

Our cover depicts a close-up section of a charcoal and chalk self-portrait by cartoonist Dave Berg. For the whole humorous picture—from head to foot—turn to page 23. *Used by permission of Dave Berg. Artwork from the* Catalog of Original Cartoon Art, *Mark J. Cohen, 707.528.3440.*

Pipes AND TOBACCOS

A quarterly magazine celebrating pipes of all kinds and fine tobaccos.

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A plague of *antis*

They lied to us! They may not have known it at the time, but they lied.

As the anti-tobacco forces gained more and more sway over the nation, a freedom of choice backlash developed. To counter this, the *anti-* zealots swore that their movement was focused only on "demon" tobacco. Theirs was a one-time pogrom of tobacco-annihilation designed to save the country from an unpopular behavior. Once this terrible product had been defeated and the American people had been saved from a fate worse than death, their efforts would cease.

They haven't even finished their original task, and guess what? They're baaack, but in a new guise!

The extremely vocal minority that is determined to save us from ourselves has created a whole industry, focused on destroying tobacco. With the end of their efforts in sight, the tens of thousands of people who make their living by fighting against tobacco find themselves facing unemployment.

Addicted to living well and to basking in the public spotlight, the *anti*-tobacco forces had developed a whole cadre of professional *antis*. The signs are already appearing that belie the original promise that destroying the tobacco industry was their sole reason for existence.

Perhaps the best recent example was a "health" insert that appeared in our local newspaper. Fat was being attacked with the same vigor as the early attacks on tobacco. The statistics were the same; only the target had changed. One article stated unequivocally that 350,000 people die every year because they are overweight. Another article claimed that being overweight causes diabetes, breast cancer, prostate cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, among other life-threatening problems.

Yet another article quoted a noted Ivy League professor who proposed that food be taxed to reflect its potential for contributing to the weight crisis and its health costs.

Our food is already labeled, as are tobacco products. I approve of labeling. I believe people need information with which to make intelligent decisions for themselves. It is the next step that I vehemently oppose. I don't want a minuscule minority—or a majority, either—forcing me to follow their beliefs. This is my life. I get only one shot at living it, and I don't want zealots fouling it up for me, whether it's good for me or not. I want to foul it up for myself.

Actually, we should feel sorry for these societal manipulators. They have obviously become addicted to their own behavior. They can no longer control themselves and fill jobs that contribute positively to the national welfare.

The first step toward helping them? Labeling, of course. Each *anti-*, including professionals, should wear a badge at all times that reads: "Danger: *Anti-*. Exposure to this individual can severely damage the quality of your life." Then there need to be support groups to help these addicts re-enter society as productive members. "*Antis* Anonymous." I can hear it now. "My name is John, and I'm an *Anti-*. I have gone three days without interfering in the lives of others." (Applause.)

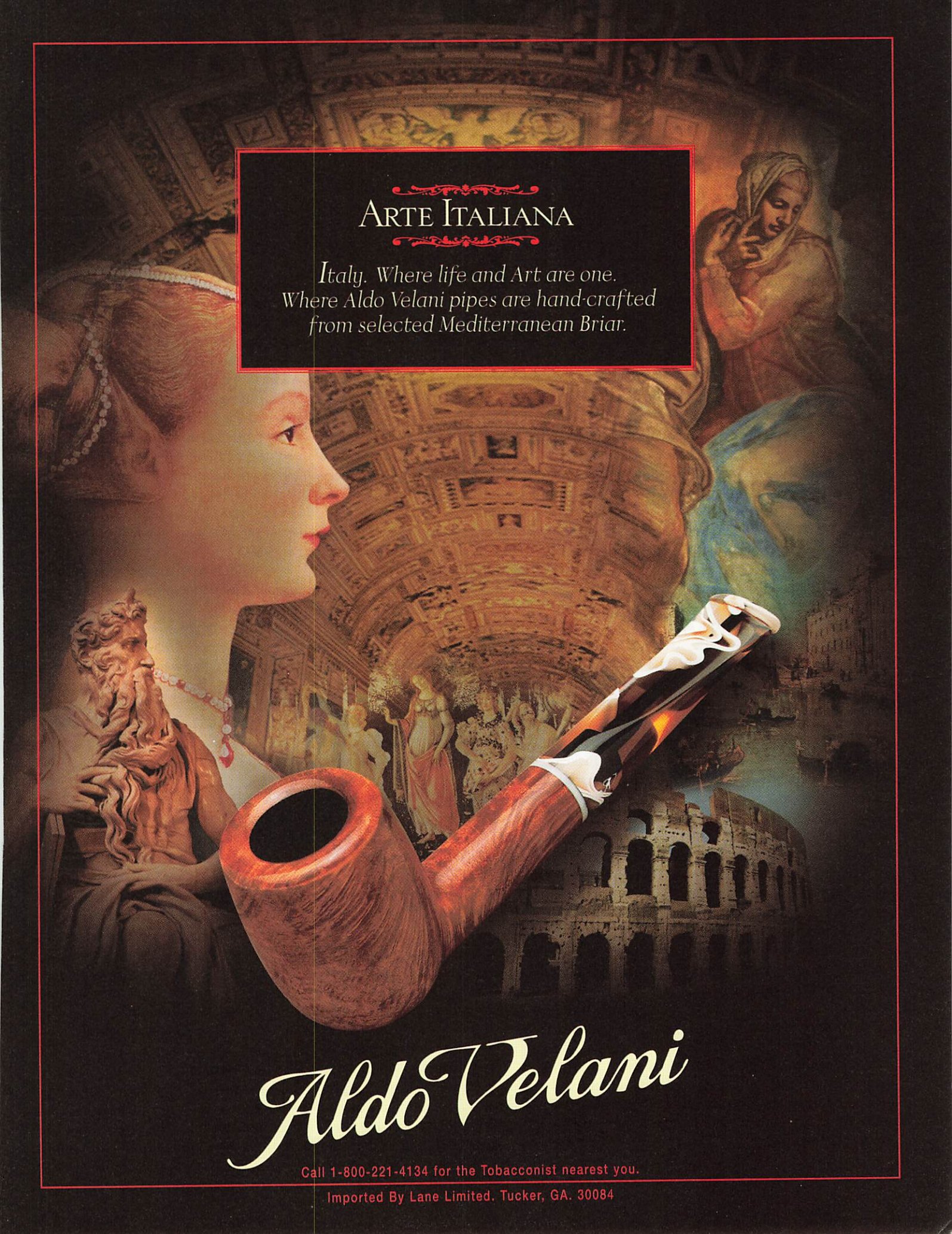
Hard-core *antis* should be prevented from contaminating others. Perhaps they should be required to stand outside in small groups, regardless of the weather, where they can spend short intense periods of time interfering with each other.

This would be far preferable to waking up one morning to realize that all forms of wine, beer, coffee, soft drinks, desserts, automobiles and other amenities of life have been eliminated, and not remembering when we passed the threshold when life ceased to be worth living.

Dayton H. Mathick

Stories in progress:

Cornell & Diehl Tobaccos
Mark Tinsky, Pipemaker
Frank Burla's Pipe Museum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P&T Readers Respond

An Accurate McRaney

I greatly enjoyed reading the article you wrote about me in the Winter issue of *Pipes and tobaccos*. It's refreshing to read a magazine that deals with people and situations factually rather than with the tabloid journalism that so many other magazines seem to favor these days. I must admit that my favorite piece was the story on Mark Twain. I'm delighted that my fascination with pipes has resulted in my being included among such fine company.

Gerald McRaney
New Orleans, Louisiana

On 4 mm Smoke Holes

The article by Richard S. Newcombe in the Fall issue pertaining to an easy draw is absolutely right on the mark. Mr. Newcombe clearly states and explains the reasons and need for a pipe to have a sufficiently open air channel to allow for a free and easy draw.

Some years ago I encountered the problem of a hot smoking pipe and the serious tongue bite that usually occurs. These pipes are very unpleasant to smoke. Frequently these pipes are also wet and sloppy smoking, but the "fried tongue" experience was truly remarkable and particularly unpleasant; certainly something to "put off" any new or inexperienced pipe smoker.

I too found that opening the air channel can make all the difference in the world in an otherwise unsmokable monster that to me is somewhat akin to a fire-breathing dragon.

I would suggest everyone at least give it a try on one of their old dragons—the difference in smoking characteristics and quality is amazing. You may even find a hidden treasure among the dragons that otherwise make your tongue burn just to think about smoking.

L.V. Hawley
Fresno, California

Last night I read Rick Newcombe's article on 4 mm airholes in pipe shanks and in the stem. For those who still think in inches it's approximately .165 inches. This is close to a 5/32 drill bit.

I must admit to being very skeptical about Newcombe's theory. As I use a 5/32 airhole in my own pipes, I just used a drill to clean out one of my favorite pipes and restore it to the original dimension. The stem, however, is another matter. I drilled with a 5/32 bit just above the bite in the stem, then drilled through the bite with a .120 drill which I feared would crack or pierce the bite. It didn't.

I then took a small dremel and—as suggested—ovalled the hole so as not to make the bite too thin. To give you an idea of the diameter of the bite, most standard rubber bits are approximately .185 inches. A Jacopo or one of my pipes is approximately .170. A Dunhill with a thin bite runs .150 to .165. So you can calculate that a stem with a bite that small couldn't possibly take a hole of the same diameter.

But with a .120 drilled out bite and ovalling, it did work. So for most pipes the idea is technically sound, though if you tend to clench your jaw or bite your stem I wouldn't advise this procedure, as you are going to bite through a lot of stems!

The draw was definitely different—much easier. The smoke seemed to float through the pipe. I was tempted to relight a couple of times as it almost felt like it was going out—a little disconcerting but I got used to it about halfway through the bowl. In the second bowl, I packed a little tighter and got the concentration of smoke that I was used to. The first bowl seemed to have too much air. The smoke felt cooler than normal. For those who experience a hot smoke, or smoke a strong tobacco, this might be a good alternative. All in all it's a pleasant experience.

I can't say I'm going to convert all my stems to this system, even though my initial results are positive. As mentioned, I was very skeptical but think the idea has merit and is worth individual experimentation.

What I would not recommend is converting your old bit. I think you would be better off starting with a new one for these reasons:

1. Old bits have teeth marks which make the tolerances even closer if not prohibitive.

2. In a bent pipe you have to restraighten the stem before drilling. It's hard to get it perfectly straight, which may throw the drilling off and pierce the stem anyway.

3. If you don't like the change, you can always put your old bit back on!

Please don't rush out and send all your pipes off for this procedure. Try one first and see how it smokes for you. Remember the tolerances are very tight and thin; you are probably going to go through more stems. The other option would be to go with old-style bits that have thick (and uncomfortable) bites—something like the original lucite stems. There would be a substantial trade-off in comfort by doing this. I think we need to experiment, consider the trade-offs and come to our own individual conclusions.

Mark Tinsky
American Smoking Pipe Company
Pocono Lake, Pennsylvania

Photo Format...

Some months ago I purchased some pipes and tobacco from your company. The pipes were OK, but the pipe tobacco was old, so strong it could not be used. Should I send it back? It's terrible. It has been on hand for a long period of time. Replace it

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LONDON

THE SHELL BRIAR PIPE

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or refund my money. I spend a lot of money with your company.

C.B.
Hartley, Delaware

P&T: You must have us confused with some other company—we don't sell pipes or tobacco. We sell magazines and the advertising space in them, but leave the retail end of the industry to others.

We get a surprising volume of mail from people wanting to order pipes from our "catalog." Must be all the photos of pipes; maybe if we reduce the number of pipe photos...

I think your magazine is great! Just one thing though: more photos of pipes! And tobaccos! And pipes! Lots more pictures of pipes! As you can tell, I really like pipes.

Theodore Naydan
Ballston Lake, New York

I have enjoyed your magazine for quite a while now and look forward to every issue with great anticipation. Your fine publication is a joy to read and is very informative for a novice pipe smoker like myself. Even though I'm only 29, I relish the quiet and peaceful pleasure a good bowl brings at work or at home with a good book.

Here is my subscription, with great expectations for more outstanding issues in the future.

Melvin D. Jones
Iberia, Missouri

My love of the pipe began 34 years ago as a college freshman. Along with a couple of buddies, I was following the Bing Crosby Pro-Am golf tournament on the Monterrey Peninsula in California. One evening we found a great smoke shop in Carmel and each bought a starter pipe and some tobacco. I was hooked. Through the years I found great pleasure in visiting tobacco shops, acquiring special pieces and smoking a wide variety of blends. A few years ago I lost my desire for smoking, perhaps due to increasing demands of my career and less time spent relaxing. Thanks to your publication I again get a pipe out in the evening and find the flavor most satisfying.

Your articles have covered an interesting array of subjects and presented many beautiful pipes. Unless I have missed it, the Charatan Pipe has yet to be covered. My own Charatans are the most enjoyable in my collection, each providing an excellent smoking experience. Would you consider an article to present the history of this fine brand of pipe?

L. Campbell Schutte
Kansas City, Missouri

P&T: Congratulations on your newfound leisure time—a good pipe is truly the best way to enjoy it! Charatan is on our list of must-do articles.

Ad Controversy

I had considered giving my husband a gift subscription to *Pipes and tobaccos* until I saw the enclosed ads. I am shocked that a classy magazine such as yours would promote such tasteless and offensive (to anyone with any sense of "cooth") advertisements! Why do you think it takes breasts & bodies to sell "smokes"?

Amy Gibson
Clinton, Missouri

I have read every issue of *Pipes and tobaccos* magazine and consider it to be an extremely high-quality magazine. The articles and columns in *P&T* are the best in print regarding our hobby. However, I am afraid that, for me, *Pipes and tobaccos* has one fatal flaw: the inclusion of nudity in the advertisement. I consider the CAO advertisement (page 21) in the Winter 1998 issue to be unnecessary and offensive.

Images such as this make *P&T* a magazine I am uncomfortable leaving out in my home and sharing with others. Please don't misunderstand me. I am not trying to tell anyone how to live their lives. Anyone who desires to view nudity has that right and there are plenty of publications to oblige them. I am simply saying that when I bought a three-year subscription to *P&T*, I was supporting what I thought was a tremendous pipe magazine, not another conduit for pornography. Therefore, I am requesting that you cease the presentation of nudity in *Pipes and tobaccos*. Of course, the decision for its content is yours. If you determine that images such as the one referenced will continue to be in the magazine, please cancel my subscription and send no more issues to my home.

John Hughey
Phoenix, Arizona

P&T: We appreciate your views on this subject, and thank you for the thoughtful feedback. While we do not develop the ads that are submitted, the publisher reserves the right to accept or decline any advertising materials. We have in the past rejected certain ads, though that is a difficult and subjective decision to make, especially considering that the ads sold are what enable us to publish this magazine. However, given industry norms—and the fact that we are a magazine devoted to the diversion of tobacco, and thus implicitly designed for adults—we do not feel that these ads require our censorship.

The companies that place these ads tell us that they continue to run them not because of prurient or artistic interests, but simply because they work. We live in a society where sex sells.

It is interesting that advertising worldwide utilizes images of scantily clad, digitally enhanced models to sell cars, jewelry, clothes, liquor, soap, tools, athletic club memberships, television shows, food, vacations, watches, furniture—well, just about everything, including tobacco products.

New Smokers Speak

I'm a novice pipe smoker and have been watching your magazine with rapt attention. When I started smoking a pipe, I dove into the literature and legerdemain with gusto.

Your magazine is a buoy to my spirits in the continuing search for a satisfying pipe experience from leaf to ash. The articles keep me entertained and informed. I open a new issue and always learn something.

I purchased, about a week ago, a copy of one of your competitor's issues. Not a pipe. Not a one. Not a page. Not a hint. *P&T* has spoiled me. You can count on me as a subscriber as long as you publish.

John Szymankieicz
Panama City, Florida

Some things become classics the day they're made...

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If you enjoy classic things, including fine cigars, you understand the value of protecting your investments. We love fine cigars, so we started our company, Cigar Classics, to specialize in products offering cigar travel protection. Our full line of cigar accessories includes ruggedly handsome 10 and 30-cigar travel humidors expertly built by ZERO Halliburton® as well as our handy Pocket Humidor™ series in 1, 2 and 3-cigar styles. We also carry precision cutters, air purifiers and much more. And of course, each item in our Cigar Classics collection is selected strictly for its classic qualities – style, design and functionality.

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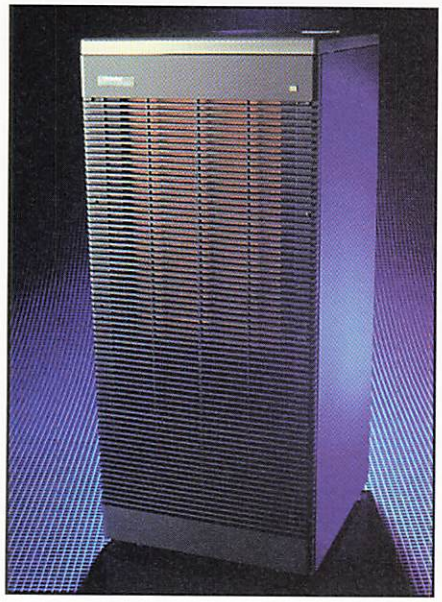
Air Cleaning Equipment

The Smoke Butler 911

an Air Cleaner, designed for heavy smoke and odor



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I just started smoking a pipe about half a year ago (after being a cigar smoker for 1-1/2 years). While I still enjoy cigars, I find pipe smoking far more economical, considering today's exorbitant cigar prices. Pipe smoking for me is also more relaxing, especially when the world is quiet in the late evening hours.

After reading some of the cigar mags (which are mostly ads and "lifestyles of the phenomenally wealthy" filler), your magazine is a refreshing and educational change.

I would like to see more articles on pipe tobaccos and how to select tobaccos. This would benefit beginners and aficionados alike.

Keep up the good work, and please don't let *P&T* turn into Donald Trump land.

David C. Mandelstamm
cyberspace

P&T: You'll be seeing much more on tobaccos here as the year unfolds. Kevin Cook's tobacco reviews and the ongoing coverage of tobacco companies (see Germain & Son in this issue) will provide our readers more and more tobacco knowledge. There are hundreds of fine tobaccos out there, and reading P&T *will help you determine which ones are right for you.*

As a novice pipe smoker, actually on and off for over 30 years, I find your magazine very informative and enjoyable. Not only the information on pipes and tobaccos, but the interesting reading about pipemakers and the people who smoke pipes—present and past. Enclosed is my check for a subscription and I look forward to the time *Pipes and tobaccos* becomes a monthly publication.

Terry G. McCarty
St. Charles, Missouri

Where's Mickles?

I thought nothing could surpass the love I have for my two favorite vices: good beer and great whiskey (all in moderation, of course). It seems, however, that I was mistaken. Until I started reading your articles, I really believed that "a pipe is just a pipe." Thanks for showing that there's nothing as liberating as variety.

Having read the above comments, you can understand why printing articles like the one about Clarence Mickles (Winter 1998) is like tying your dog to a tree and setting a steak inches out of reach! Not five minutes after finishing the article, I was on the phone trying to find his pipes, but had no luck. Where can I find them?

Ryan Dunn
San Mateo, California

P&T: The omission of a contact number for Mickles Pipes was not calculated—it was an egregious oversight. Chuck Stanion—who wrote the article and abjectly wishes he had not forgotten to include the appropriate phone number—has taken to whomping himself over the head with a brass tobacco humidor every-time someone phones him asking how to get in touch with Clarence Mickles. To find the nearest retailer carrying Mickles' pipes, or to inquire about his refurbishing services or custom pipemaking, call Mickles at 708.748.7293.

However, please do not interpret the current inclusion of this information as a petition to stop calling Chuck about Mickles. We in the office have grown accustomed to the regularity and the pleasing A-flat reverberation of that brass humidor.

Mellow Out

In the Winter 1998 issue, Serge J. Cadet thanks you for a "wonderfully peaceful magazine." But your answer to the "Heathen Swine" letter, on the same page, suggests solving a problem of burglary with a Smith & Wesson. Your answer was highly offensive to me. I feel that pipe smokers, generally, are contemplative types, not N.R.A. activists. Try to keep your violent attitudes out of print.

Tom Stoup
San Diego, California

P&T: We do not endorse the use of violence as a remedy for social problems. As pipe smokers, however, in a world that is increasingly unfriendly toward our hobby, we do endorse tolerance—tolerance toward the right to smoke as well as all other individual rights, and tolerance toward the occasional jest. We apologize for any discomfort our attempt at humor may have precipitated. *P&T*

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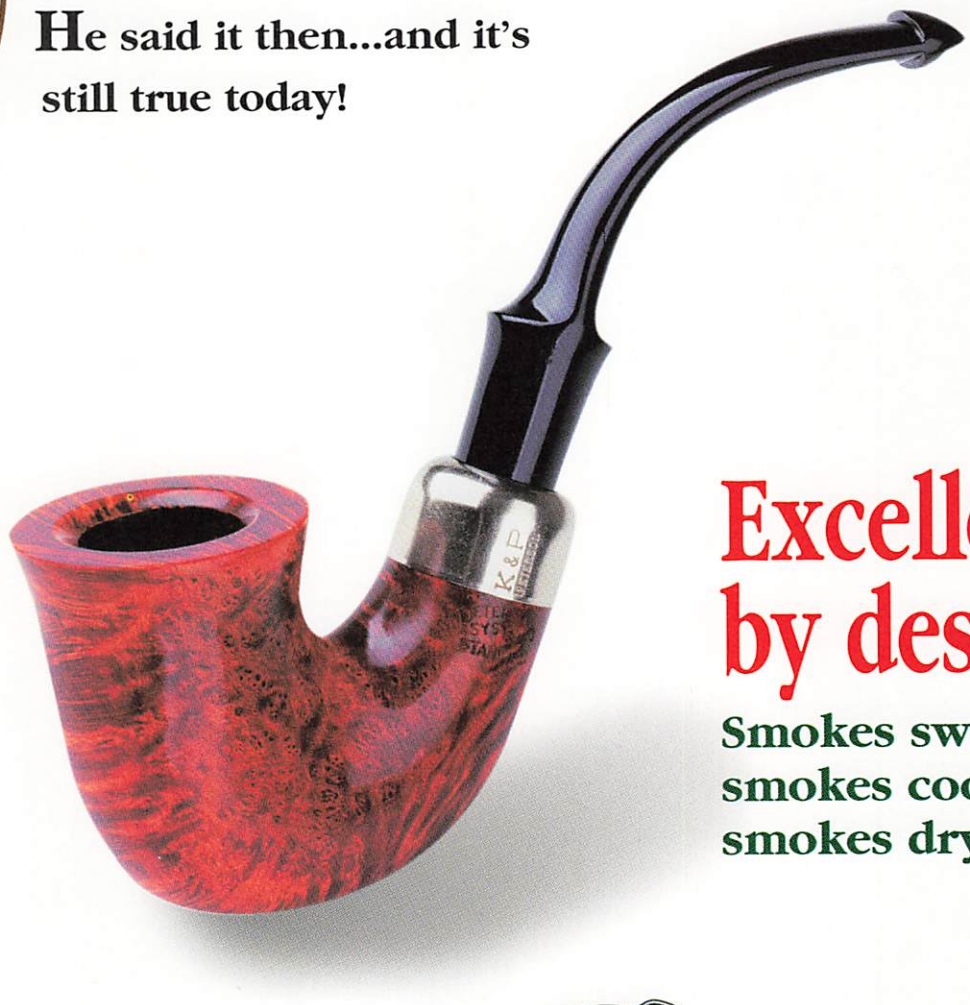

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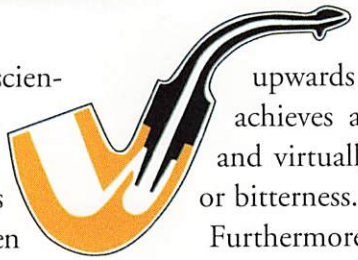

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What's with the "black paint" inside pipe bowls?

Peterson Reservoir Cleaning

I have just purchased my first Peterson pipe with the Peterson system. What is the best way to keep the reservoir clean? Is it wise to put a small amount of pipe cleaning fluid into it to dislodge any accumulating deposits?

David Keller
Orlando, Florida

You should be very disciplined in cleaning system pipes, scrubbing out the reservoir after every smoke. Since these pipes never gurgle or give an overt indication that they are getting gunked up, it is just too easy to let them sit, which allows the moisture to evaporate and dissolve into the wood. Without proper cleaning, a system pipe is at risk of souring.

But they are easy to clean. A Q-Tip dipped in grain alcohol or any pipe-sweetener will do fine. A doubled-up pipe cleaner works fine, too. Just keep swabbing the reservoir until the Q-Tip comes out clean.

Defunct Pipe Lighter

Do you have a current address for Nimrod Products, makers of Nimrod Pipe Lighters?

Charles O. Bell
Greensboro, North Carolina

Nimrod lighters are no longer made, and Nimrod Products is out of business. You can occasionally find Nimrod lighters in antique shops, typically for around $20. If you see one, grab it; they are good, practical lighters.

Non-briar Wood

I was wondering if anyone used wood other than briar for their pipes. I was thinking of carving a bowl from some pear wood, since it is a relatively dense wood. What other types of wood, besides fruitwood, can be used?

Mike Parker
cyberspace

During the last 2,000 years pipes have been made from virtually every material at hand, including dirt (a bowl shaped in the ground with a reed inserted into the earth), stone, clay, glass, antler, gourd, metal, seashell, corncob and probably a number of materials better off forgotten. Yogurt pipes never became fashionable. An uncle of mine once made his own pipe out of clay laced with asbestos and radium—it was fireproof, he said, and he could find it in the dark. Funny, I haven't seen him in years...

At any rate, just about every type of wood has been used. As you mention, fruitwood is a good material, cherry being the most traditional for pipemaking. Fruitwood pipes will not last as long as briar, though, as they are not as dense.

Other woods that have been used in pipes with some success are hickory, olivewood, rosewood, walnut, bubinga (from central Africa), zebrawood (from N.W. Africa) and paduak (also from N.W. Africa). Cocobolo has also been tried, but there have been reports of severe allergic reactions—in some cases even anaphylactic shock—in woodworkers exposed to its dust and resins. So be careful with your experimentation; you never know how one's individual chemistry may react.

Black Bowls

What's going on with the "black paint" inside pipe bowls these days? I hate the stuff, and much prefer the inside of new pipes be "au naturel."

Jim Adam
cyberspace

The black coating inside pipe bowls has a purpose: to protect the pipe. Many smokers prefer an unlined bowl, but that is up to the manufacturer.

J.T. Cooke, of JT&D Cooke Pipes, has developed and uses his own coating. "I wouldn't let a pipe leave the shop without it," he says. "And I wouldn't guarantee a pipe without that protective coating."

Cooke's pipes actually have a two-layer system. "The first coat is a fireproofing. Briar is just wood, after all." The second coat is a slightly different compound. "It is hard and dry when cold," says Cooke, "but when it heats up during smoking, it becomes slightly tacky, so that ash sticks to it and promotes a good cake."

But different makers use different compounds. In the 1970s, the Briar Workshop used graphite as a fireproofing. It was very hard and protected the wood admirably. Some pipemakers just use a vegetable dye, the sole purpose of which is cosmetic.

"The Danish makers," says Cooke, "as far as I can tell, use a durable clay, which makes a good firewall."

Since each manufacturer uses a different substance, with different overall purposes and qualities, preferences should probably be made on an individual basis.

Alien Abduction

Like all rational human beings, I've always scoffed at the ridiculous stories that circulate through the tabloids concerning alien abductions. You know the ones—innocent couple or individual is spirited to a spaceship where aliens with lightbulb heads and tentacle fingers perform intrusive medical procedures and then set them free like numbered-and-tagged grizzly bears to be monitored for life.

But what I am about to relate actually happened—to me! And though I know most people will disbelieve my story, I feel other pipe smokers need to know about my experience and take steps to avoid the horror that threatens.

Because my wife won't let me smoke in the house, I was outside, about to fill my pipe, when strange flashing lights appeared in the sky, and next thing I knew I was on a metal operating table in an alien spaceship with short toad-looking, no-blinking hairless aliens all around me. It was even more disconcerting than going to my regular doctor; although it was nice to get in so quick.

Some sort of force field kept me from moving. One of the aliens (I'll call him "Bob") leaned over me, and projected his thoughts into my mind without speaking. "Do not worry, earthman," said Bob. "You will be returned to your strange planet immediately after we disembowel you and implant you with hideous micro-organisms that will make you vote like a Californian."

Now I was scared.

I could hear the thoughts of the other aliens as well, and they all seemed pretty happy about the prospect of digging through my innards, except one who was thinking that Bob's butt looked pretty cute but who left the room when everyone stepped away from him. Bob started slicing through my coat with a hand-held laser, stopping when my pipe and tobacco fell out of the severed inside pocket. "What's this, a weapon?"

"I'll never tell, iguana-face."

"Then we will extract the information," said Bob, and he applied a toilet plunger to my

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forehead and pumped all my pipe-smoking knowledge right out of my head. Now they knew everything I did about smoking, and they fired up my pipe and started passing it around.

They liked it. They started to fight over it. "Hey, Gruuzzlibdrickck," said Bob, "pass that back over here; it's my turn."

Gruuzzlibdrickck declined.

"We must have more of these devices," said Bob. "You have more, earthman?"

"It's the only one on the planet," I said. "Try Neptune."

When a thorough search (and I mean thorough—again I thought of my doctor) revealed no more pipes, they let me go. I went to bed, thinking it was over.

But next day, as I was getting in my car to go to work, a spaceship zipped through the sky, stopped 10 feet above me, and a force field pulled me up through a hatch. With no small talk, a gang of aliens mugged me, taking another pipe, and threw me out the hatch into the shrubbery.

Now there're always two or three spaceships hovering over my house, waiting for me to leave so they can steal another pipe. I can't live like this; I'm almost out of pipes. I'm smoking pocket lint, for God's sake! I need help! Send pipes!

name withheld
Gainesville, Florida

Next time they pick you up, how about asking if they'd like a subscription to *P&T*?

Finding an Old Blend

I used to smoke a pipe tobacco blend back around 1970 that was called "Seaforth." It is no longer available to my knowledge. I would like to locate it. Is someone blending it under another name? I used to buy it at the Ivory Lion tobacconist in Findlay, Ohio, which is no longer in business.

Jerry Young
Spring Hill, Florida

As far as I can determine, the blend you are looking for is not currently mass marketed under the name Seaforth. There is a tobacco called "Sea Mist," distributed by F.G.T. Enterprises, but chances are it is not the same one.

Tobacconists often blend their own tobaccos and give them their own names, and it is possible that the blend you remember is one of these. It may be that it was bought pre-blended in bulk and then given the name by the tobacconist as a house blend. If that is the case, it may still be available, but there is no way to figure out which tobacco blend it is.

Some blending companies (Cornell & Diehl is one) will work with you to develop and tweak a blend until it is exactly what you want. If you can remember what Seaforth tasted like, with some experimentation you may be able to reconstruct it.

Flaming Error

I was appalled when I read your suggestion to apply an open flame to a finely finished pipe stem. The tenon on a stem may be easily adjusted at a cost of about $0.20.

Empty a full box of salt into a small saucepan and put on low heat. After the salt has attained a heated state, spoon it into a mountain shape and insert only the tenon for a few moments. The tenon may then be expanded as you described [by pushing it against a flat surface]. Care must be taken not to force an enlarged tenon into the stem. The tenon may be reheated as required until the correct diameter is achieved. Please, please, no flame on good-quality vulcanite.

Barry Pickering
Honolulu, Hawaii

That was the Fall 1997 issue, and if I recall correctly (and I do, because I have it right here in front of me) I was warning people NOT to use that method, although I did explain what the procedure was. Of course I knew that some would use it anyway—that's a matter of personal choice. My mechanic says I shouldn't drive over curbs and pedestrians, but sometimes I just can't resist.

The salt method is a more efficient means for uniformly heating vulcanite, and is great for changing the bend in stems. But heat—whether applied with flame, hot salt, or napalm—should not be utilized for adjusting tenon diameter. The roundness of the tenon is at risk, and where the tenon is not round, the mortise can be gravely damaged.

Dent Repair

Is there a simple way to repair a dent in a briar bowl?

William R. Standard
cyberspace

No. Well, yes. But don't do it. (Here we go again.)

One method is to put a damp cloth over the dent and hold a hot iron to it briefly. The wood will be infused with steam, expand, and fill in the dent.

Jim Cooke, professional pipe repairman, does not recommend this. "The water will hurt the briar," he says. "You're basically injecting water through steam, then removing it again when you smoke the pipe and it heats up. A dimple will reform and harden. Besides, you can't pinpoint steam; you're adding it to the wood all around the dent."

Any dye on the pipe is also at risk. Since pipe dyes are diluted powders, says Cooke, steam can dissolve them and redistribute them over the spot, blotching the coloring. Any wax will also melt and infuse the wood, altering the consistency of the finish. "The only way to do it right," he says, "is to sand the whole pipe and refinish it. This is better, easier and quicker than fooling around with steam."

Antique Pipe

I am requesting assistance identifying a pipe that has been in my father's family—presumably since 1810, the date carved on it. The carved image on the pipe shows a "Napoleonic" Soldier next to a cannon in front of a brick wall. There is some slab with the date—1810—carved on it. The 4-inch pipe is made of meerschaum with brass trim and the 22-inch stem is made of cherry wood.

Elizabeth V. Csordas
Hyde Park, New York

According to Frank Burla, an expert in antique pipes, this is an example of a "commemorative pipe"—one made to commemorate some special occasion, like a birthday or anniversary. Though marked with the date 1810, that is the date being commemorated, not the date of the manufacture of the pipe. It may have been made in 1860 for a 50th wedding anniversary gift, or in 1870 for a 60th birthday. So it is still quite an old piece. However, it is not terribly unusual, as antiques go. *P&T*

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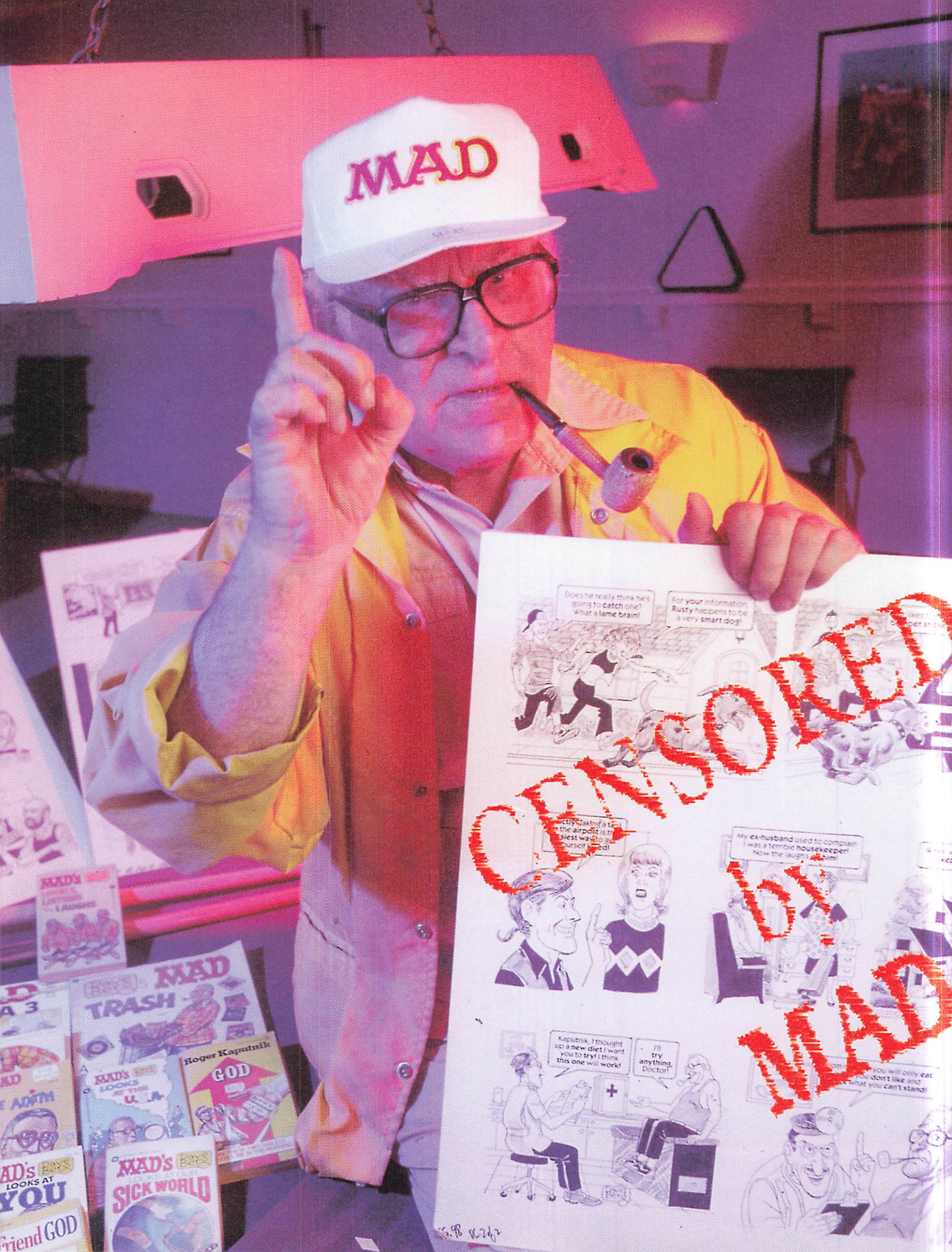
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Does he really think he's going to catch one? What a lame brain!
For your information, Rusty happens to be a very smart dog!
My ex-husband used to complain I was a terrible housekeeper! Now the laugh's on him!
Kaputnik, I thought up a new diet I want you to try! I think this one will work!
I'll try anything, Doctor!
MAD TRASH
Roger Kaputnik GOD
MAD's LOOKS AT YOU
MAD's SICK WORLD

The Lighter Side of... Dave Berg

by Larry O'Connor

Artists and writers sometimes spend decades searching for their niche. Cartoonist Dave Berg found his at age 3.

The legendary Ben G., now 77, still recalls his artistic epiphany, back in the early 1920s, after a family outing to Sheepshead Bay in his native Brooklyn, New York.

"When we got home, I opened up a paper bag and drew the entire scene—the boats, the people, everything. That's when my parents knew they had an artist on their hands," says Berg.

The pipe-smoking cartoonist got his start in the funny business in the early 1940s illustrating and writing for *The Spirit*, a comic book included in Sunday newspaper supplements, and then spent nearly a decade with Marvel Comics.

Berg moved to *MAD* magazine in 1956, four years after the magazine's founding, and has been there ever since. The third son of Lithuanian immigrants, Berg has earned world renown for his "Berg's Eye View" series of comic vignettes, as well as 13 *MAD* books filled with his quirky cartoons.

Berg's stock-in-trade is his zany caricatures of ordinary people bumbling their way through real life situations. Through his looks at "The Lighter Side of..." a variety of mundane topics, Berg pokes fun at the pettiness of people, their greed and laziness, and a litany of other human foibles.

At times Berg's cartoons are outright knee-slappers, but the artist and writer is often aiming at a subtler comic poignancy. One of his favorite sequences, for example, depicts a white man alone in a black neighborhood at night. The man hears footsteps and gets more and more frightened as they come ever closer. "Finally," says Berg, "this black man comes up alongside of him and says, 'I'm scared. Do you mind if I walk with you?'"

Part of the allure of being a cartoonist, says Berg, is "being able to sound off" about pet peeves. So in addition to his send-ups on garden-variety stupidity, Berg also takes on serious issues, such as racial prejudice or what he sees as the absurdity of the NRA position on gun control.

Berg's sense of humor tends toward a refreshingly gentle—if very wacky—understatement. In fact, in his early days at *MAD*, then-editor Al Feldstein once questioned whether Berg's cartoons were hard-hitting enough. "I told him that no one listens to an angry man. If you want the world to listen to you, whisper," says the cartoonist.

The facial expressions of Berg's characters are sketched in a few seemingly swift lines. Yet Berg still captures the gamut of powerful human emotions, from the resignation and despair on the face of a middle-aged, pony-tailed man (who says if he comes home to a scene of domestic tranquility it can only mean he has gone into the wrong house), to the anger and frustration of a couple caught in an insipid argument at the marriage counselor's office, to the haughtiness of a teenager demanding the use of his father's credit card.

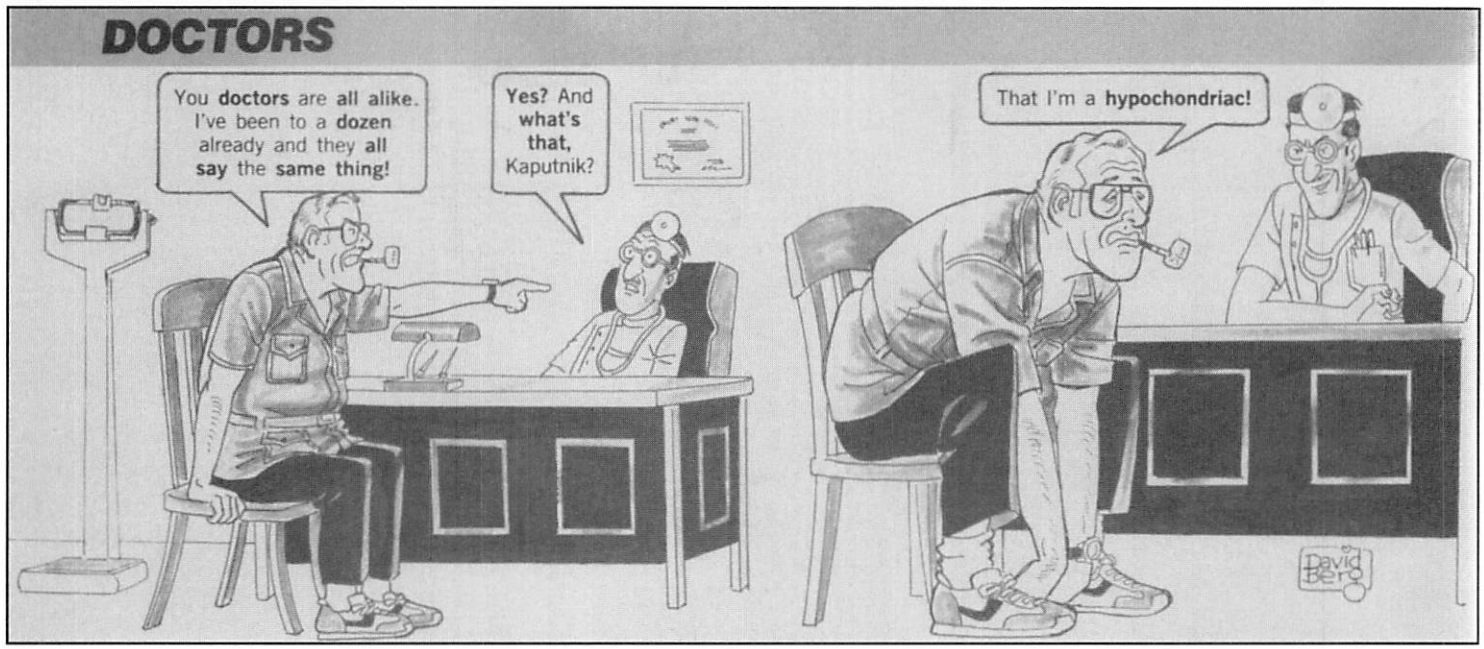
The "Berg's Eye View" series was inspired by a collection of home movies Berg made in the early '50s. Berg filmed the scenes on a Super 8 movie camera, using real people—his neighbors and family—as actors. A couple of years after joining *MAD*, Berg showed the movies to Feldstein, who suggested turning them into a cartoon series. Berg did. But even as still art, the series retains some of the original flow and feel of an old video-cam.

Berg's alter ego—the fumbling Roger Kaputnik—has appeared in "Berg's Eye View" from its inception and is one of the series' most popular characters. Putting himself in the series was Feldstein's idea. "He said, 'Show yourself as a loser or as somebody who screws things up. It's OK to laugh at everybody else, but laugh at yourself, too.'"

The expressions Berg draws on Kaputnik's face are his own. "I look in the mirror to get them right," he says.

Although Kaputnik made his public debut in *MAD*, Berg had actually invented him long before

Four decades later, and the pipe-puffing cartoonist is still MAD!


DOCTORS
You doctors are all alike. I've been to a dozen already and they all say the same thing!
Yes? And what's that, Kaputnik?
That I'm a hypochondriac!
David Berg

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"Kaputnik has been wearing that same bush-league jacket for 25 years."

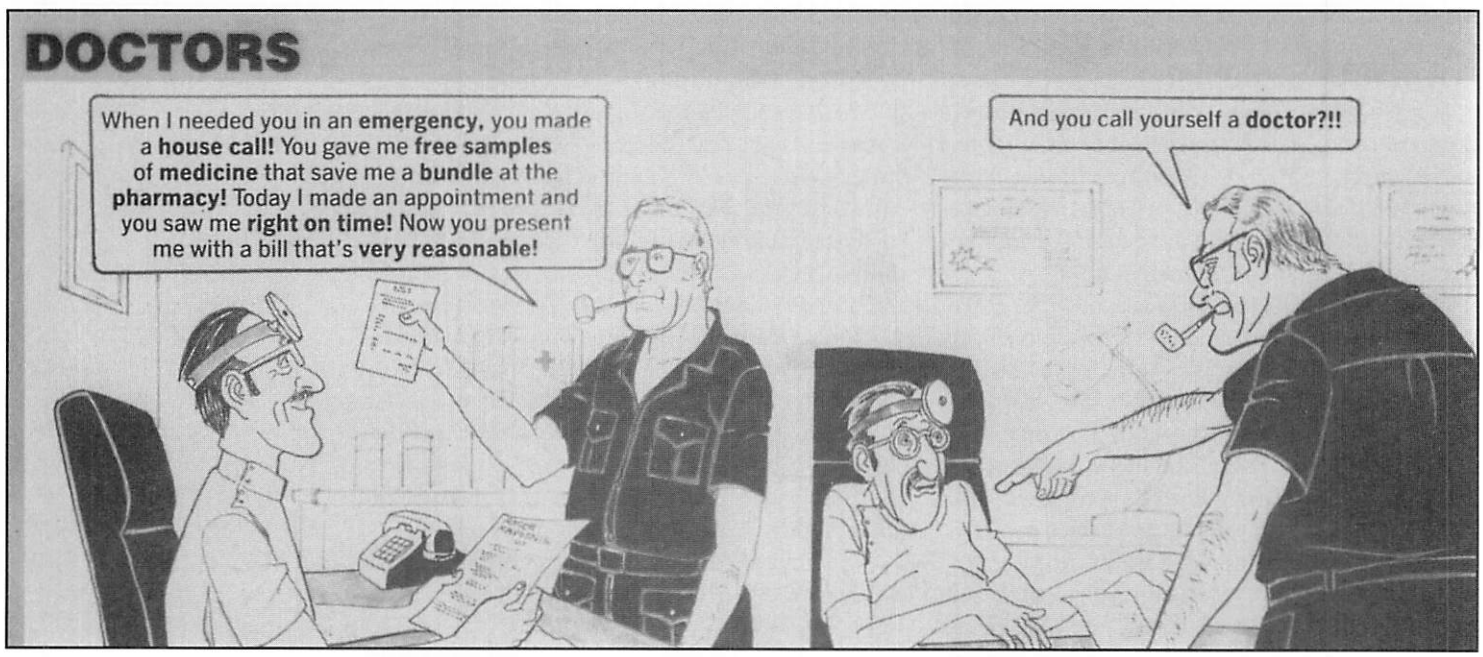
the magazine came into existence. "I gave myself the name as a kid, because my mother could never remember my real name when she was trying to call me. She'd call out everybody else in the family instead. So when she'd start to go down the list, I'd say, 'Try Roger Kaputnik.' It stuck, and then it became a family joke," says Berg.

Like his creator, Kaputnik is a corncob pipe smoker. And Berg never draws Kaputnik without his corncob. But in deference to the magazine's predominantly young readership, neither Kaputnik nor any of the other pipe smokers who have appeared in the series are ever depicted with a lit pipe. "I think in one of my sequences I called it a pacifier," says Berg.

In real life, Berg lights and smokes his pipe frequently. And there are eight or so corncobs of various shapes and sizes sitting on his desk in his studio at home in Marina del Rey, California. "I just buy whatever is available locally—big ones, small ones, whatever I find," he says.

Berg says he took up pipe smoking at the instigation of his doctor. It was 1940 and Berg was a 20-year-old art student at Manhattan's Cooper Union. The physician told Berg he was a perfectionist, and that he would need to loosen up some to avoid health problems down the road. "He said, 'You should have some leeway,'" Berg recalls. "'Go get yourself a vice.'"

When Berg told his girlfriend Vivian about the


DOCTORS
When I needed you in an emergency, you made a house call! You gave me free samples of medicine that save me a bundle at the pharmacy! Today I made an appointment and you saw me right on time! Now you present me with a bill that's very reasonable!
And you call yourself a doctor?!!

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conversation, she suggested pipe smoking. "I tried several different kinds, and I found the corncob was the sweetest. It kind of had a flavor unto itself," recalls Berg.

Vivian even helped him choose his tobacco—Revelations—an aromatic he smokes to this day.

"Then we get married, and the first thing she says is, 'Get that smelly thing out of here,'" recalls Berg, chuckling.

So Berg smokes only when he is working and only in his studio. But even at 77 the cartoonist still works six and a half days a week, usually from 9 to 5. And when he is in the studio, one or another of his corncobs will be lit almost constantly. "I find that the harder I work, the more I smoke. I don't inhale, of course, so it's not so much of a medical danger," says Berg.

Not surprisingly, Berg's studio has taken on the sweet scent of his tobacco in the 19 years since he moved from New York to the West Coast.

Completing an issue's worth of cartoon sequences for *MAD* takes about three weeks. Berg begins by writing a series of gags and sending them to the magazine's editorial office in Manhattan. (Berg works full-time on material for *MAD*, but he is technically a freelancer and has always worked out of his own studio.) The editors then pick the jokes they like, set them into type, and send ruled-up pages back to Berg for illustration.

As wonderful as Berg's illustrations are, the success of the feature is driven by the text, not the artwork, he says. "The feature I do in *MAD* is very popular, but the reason it's popular is that it's well-written."

In fact, Berg thinks of himself first and foremost as a writer. And he says his main gift may be his inquisitiveness, not only about human nature, but nearly everything else, too.

Berg credits his curiosity to being brought up in an environment that prized learning. "I went to public school, but there was tremendous emphasis on how important it was to be educated. You know, 'They can take everything else away from you, but they can't take your education,'" he says.

And that sentiment was echoed at home, the cartoonist says. Berg's father had worked as a bookbinder in Lithuania, and went into the construction business after immigrating to New York around the turn of the century. "My parents would say, 'We never had a chance, but you do, so make the most of it,'" recalls Berg.

But Berg's father was far from ignorant. The son of a rabbi, Berg's father had studied in Lithuania to become a rabbi himself, so he was well-schooled in the Talmud. "What I admired most about my father was his vast knowledge. Often we would go to the synagogue and the rabbi would come and say, 'Mr. Berg, would you like to give the sermon.' His ability to get up there without having written anything down or without any prior thought absolutely astonished me."

Berg is less strict in his interpretation of Judaism than his orthodox parents were, but no less devout. And in the late '60s and early '70s he was a frequent guest speaker on college campuses at events sponsored by the Hillel Foundation, the Jewish student organization.

Berg was expected to talk on Jewish themes to 30 or 40 Jewish students. But when word circulated that *MAD*'s Dave Berg was on campus, the audience sometimes swelled to as many as 5,000 students of all creeds. Scuttling the prepared message, Berg would have to "wing it"—much as his father had done years earlier in synagogue.

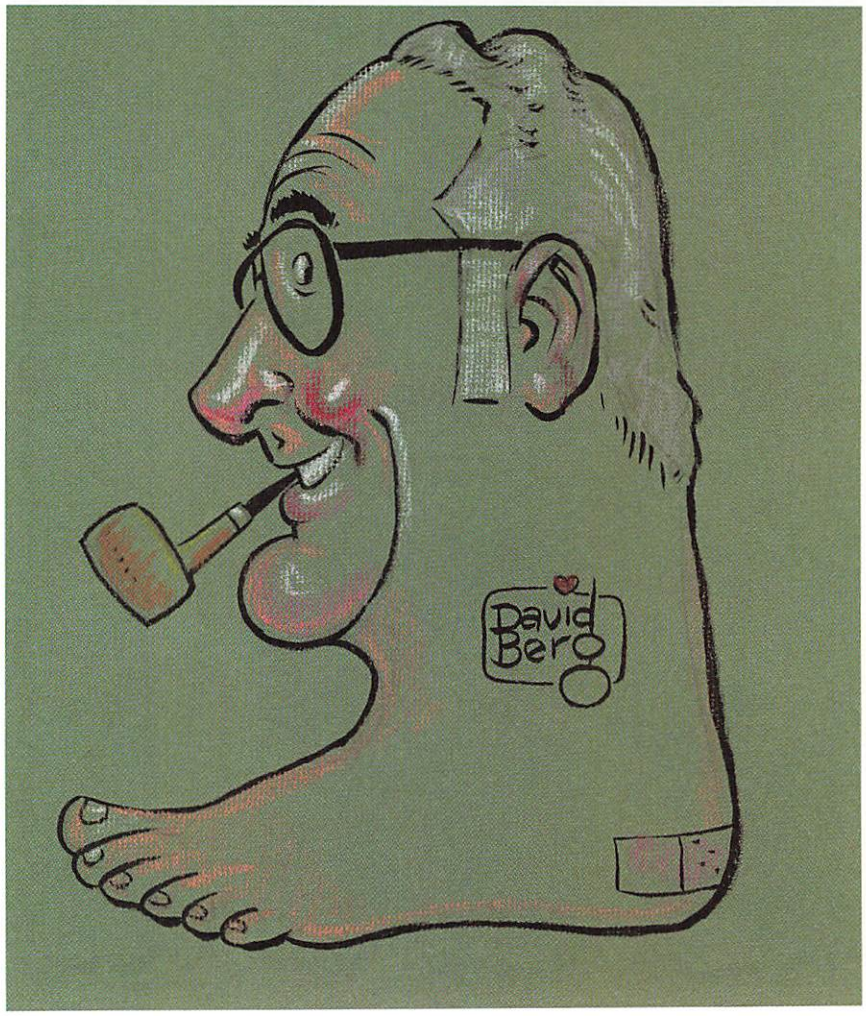
The cartoonist's campus lectures were eventually published in book form under the title *My Friend God*.

"My wife says it is the best thing I have ever written," Berg says.

Last year, Time Warner's DC Comics, which owns *MAD*, decided that the venerable humor magazine needed to update its material to keep

A Maddening Blend... of something or other

Dave Berg's visceral relationship with his tobacco–Revelation–is unencumbered by details. "I don't know if it's aromatic or Virginia or English or what, but it smells good. I sometimes mix in this other, expensive tobacco as a special treat. I don't know what it's called, but I get it at the tobacconist here in Marina del Rey."



pace with the sexier, courser humor prevalent in today's entertainment media. Although *MAD* co-editor John Ficarra says reader reaction has been generally positive, not everybody is happy with what Ficarra calls the new "edgier" *MAD*. Some parents have reacted angrily and canceled subscriptions, and at least one longtime *MAD* contributor reportedly resigned in protest.

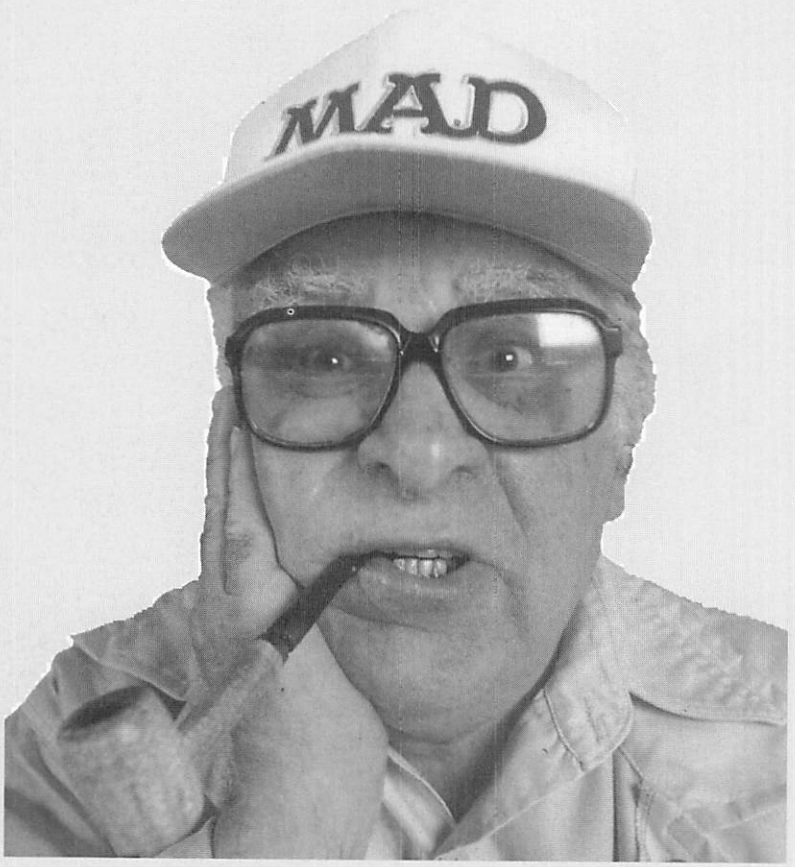
Berg admits he, too, is not completely comfortable with changes, but says they were a matter of survival. "The whole world has changed around us. Look at television. Look at the movies. So we get into more sexy subjects or are a little more outspoken to keep pace," he says.

Inside *MAD* Magazine's Department of Personnel Can-agement

How do you let a guy who has illustrated his fingers to the bone for you for 42 years know how you really feel about him? *MAD* magazine co-editor John Ficarra decided to let the corncob-puffing cartoonist Dave Berg read about it in the pages of *Pipes and tobaccos*.

Ficarra told a *P&T* editor he would relish the opportunity to say a few words about the legendary Berg. "Actually, we've been looking for a way to tell Dave he's fired," said a gleeful Ficarra, with tongue firmly in cheek. "And your magazine could be the perfect venue. Yes, this plays right into our hands."

For his part, the madcapped Berg (shown below) seemed to take the gibe in stride.



Ficarra calls Berg "one of the magazine's crown jewels" and, because his humor is still such a good fit with the magazine's readership, asking him to change was never seriously considered. "Dave has always reflected Middle America. It's an Everyman experience type of humor. And the last time I looked, people were still getting married, having kids, trying to get a job, and having hassles with the mortgage company and the bank," says Ficarra.

But Ficarra says he does think Berg ought to look at the Eddie Bauer catalog *MAD* sent him. "That Roger Kaputnik has been wearing that same bush-league jacket for 25 years," Ficarra quips.

When Berg talks of getting to spend his life writing and drawing cartoons, he sounds a bit like a kid who's made off with the cookie jar. "I have a friend who says, 'You haven't really worked a day in your life.' And he's right, I haven't," says Berg, with a chuckle.

The writer-artist says he also feels lucky to have been associated with *MAD*. "When I was living in New York, I was with all these people, who are themselves very talented, very bright and lots of fun," Berg says.

One of the perks of belonging to "The Usual Gang of Idiots," as *MAD*'s masthead refers to the magazine's contributing writers and artists, was the annual staff trip, led by founding publisher and patriarch Bill Gaines, who died in 1992.

Over the years, *MAD*'s mad legions invaded Tahiti, Mexico, Italy, Puerto Rico and a host of other exotic locations. Berg, of course, figures prominently in the *MAD* travelogue, having made a particularly good impression on the people of France in 1990.

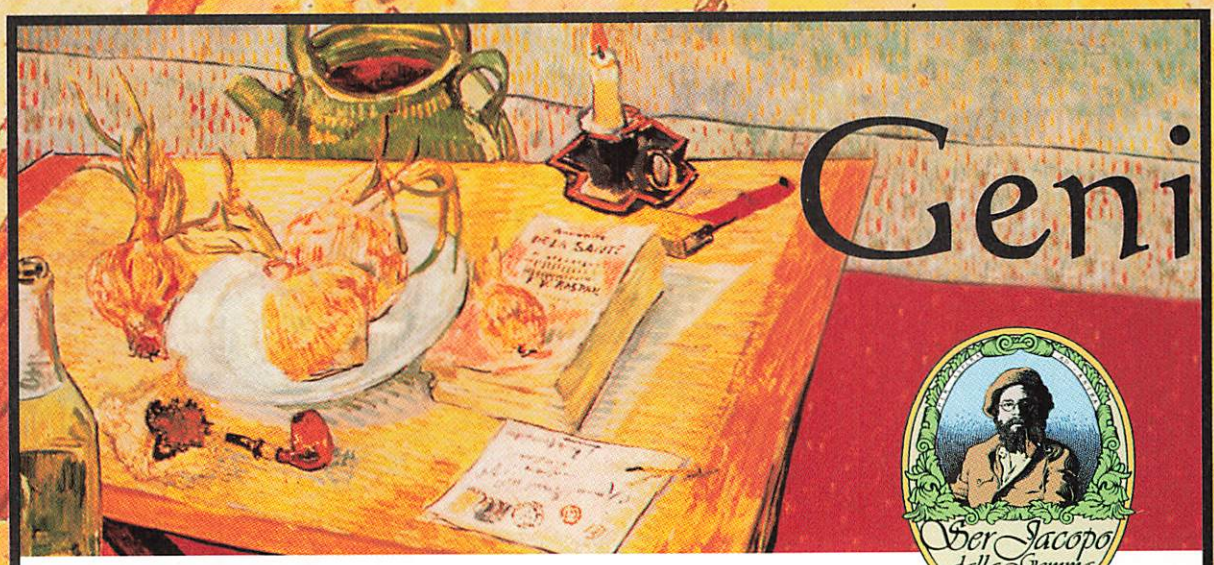
As Ficarra recounts the story, *MAD* was in Paris and had taken a day trip to Claude Monet's famous water gardens at Giverny. On the way back to Paris, Gaines found an idyllic restaurant in the French countryside.

"We took over the entire restaurant except for two tables where there were locals. [Longtime *MAD* contributor] Duck Edwing, who is a real cut-up, stood up in the middle of dinner and raised a toast to Dave, who he said had liberated the town in World War II. All of the *MAD* people started cheering, because they understood this was totally bogus," says Ficarra.

But the restaurant owner and the two tables of nationals took Edwing's toast seriously and came over to shake Berg's hand and to tell him how wonderful it all was.

Berg actually did serve in WWII, first doing poster art and later as a war correspondent in the Pacific theater for the Army Air Corps. He was even among the first Americans to arrive for the surrender of Japan. But Berg had hardly liberated any French towns.

"Dave just sat there," says Ficarra, "taking it all in and saying, 'Thank you, thank you very much.'" *P&T*



Genius

Ser Jacopo dalla Gemma
pipe fatte a mano

Picta 10

The Van Gogh "Picta" Collection
by Ser Jacopo

The 14 new "Picta" pipes pay homage to the genius of Vincent Van Gogh. Designed and handmade in limited quantities by the craftsmen of Ser Jacopo in Italy, who were inspired by the many Van Gogh paintings and drawings depicting pipes and pipe smokers, such as the example above.

Distributed by Marble Arch, Ltd.
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Picta Collection Pipes are available in 5 finishes:

Rustic
Sandblast
Ruby Smooth
Walnut Smooth
Natural Smooth

CASTELLO

Carlo Scotti's dreams of producing perfect pipes resulted in the creation of a legend

by Dayton H. Matlick

Scotti gave up a successful tobacconist career in midlife to create pipes.

In 1945, a man of Italian descent moved from Switzerland, where he had been born, to the homeland of his parents. Already an established tobacconist, his creative fire would lead him to establish a pipemaking company that is today one of the most famous in the entire world.

That man's name was Carlo Scotti. He brought with him a burning desire to make pipes...pipes that would be crown jewels among other pipes. He succeeded beyond his fondest dreams. The pipes made by the company he created—Castello—are collected with reverence, 10 years after his death.

Today, Castello operates out of the same building Scotti bought in Cantù in 1945. Day-to-day operations are in the capable hands of Franco Coppo, husband of Scotti's daughter, Savina. Coppo, an engineer by education, joined Castello 30 years ago, while engaged to Savina. Over the years he internalized Scotti's determination to produce the best possible pipes and is demanding in the standards he sets for the six-man creative work force.

But to understand Castello, the company, it is necessary to understand something about the two men who have played critical roles in its growth and development—Scotti and Coppo.

At the end of World War I, 16-year-old Scotti started working for a tobacconist. A natural at the business, he progressed rapidly. He was one of those rare individuals who seem to overflow with innovative ideas. An early concept, a mother-of-pearl-clad lighter, sold well and encouraged other new products. In time, he specialized in lighters, pipe tobaccos and pipes.

He also was a guiding force in the development of a cooperative corporation that bought products for a group of nearly 40 retail tobacconists in the town of Chiasso, where he lived and worked. The cooperative specialized in group purchases of tobacco, pipes, cigars and, particularly, cigarettes. These products were hard for small retailers to buy; the cooperative gave them purchasing power.

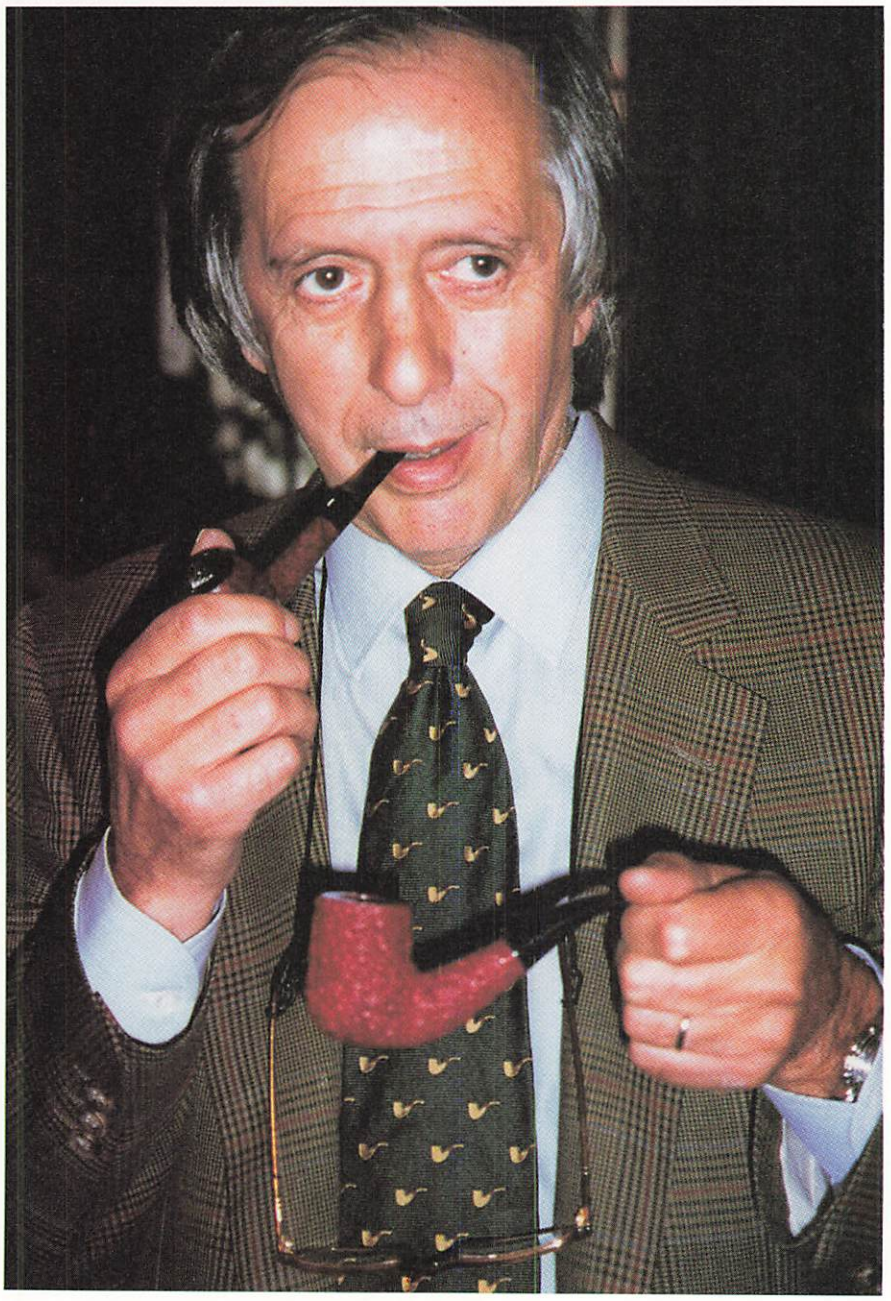
The tobacconist also developed a relationship with a pipemaker named Creda, a pipemaker in Gallarate, Italy. For two or three years this artisan made pipes for Scotti to sell in Switzerland.

Then, in 1945, after the end of World War II, the 43-year-old Scotti made a huge change in his life. He moved from Switzerland to Cantù, Italy, where his brother lived, and where he knew people were skilled at working wood. He arrived in northwest Italy determined to make pipes. Not just any pipes. It was his goal to produce the best pipes possible! He brought with him the name Castello, which he had trademarked in 1932.

The name "Castello" doesn't refer to a specific castle. Rather, Scotti chose the name because of its romance, the "music of the name" and the fact that it is easy to pronounce in English, German and French, with the same general meaning. ▶

Carlo Scotti, opposite page, devoted the last 43 years of his life to creating pipes that became famous around the world.

Castello's first pipe, the bulldog above, was produced on May 17, 1947. The company founded by Carlo Scotti is now run by his son-in-law, Franco Coppo, below. The Great Line Fiammata, upper right, and a fantastic bird's-eye pipe are examples of pipemaking at its best.



Shortly after his arrival in Cantù, he purchased the large building that the company still occupies, at Via Fossano 44. Having no knowledge of how to make pipes, the next step was to hire an artisan to work in the factory and, at the same time, teach Scotti to make pipes. The artisan, Renzo, was an important factor in the success of Castello. He was the hands that brought to fruition Scotti's creativity.

Renzo remained with Castello for almost 13 years, until his death in the mid-1960s. In addition to training Scotti, he was instrumental in setting up the factory and training other would-be pipemakers for the company. One of his apprentices, Tarcisio, still works there after 30 years.

Gradually, things began to come together for the fledgling company. Scotti had friends who worked for a large chemical factory in Italy. They told him of a material available in the United States called plexiglass, later called Lucite. It was hard, smooth and beautiful. Compared to vulcanite, it resisted tooth marks and didn't discolor over time. Scotti became the first known pipemaker to use this new material for mouthpieces.

After two years of learning and putting together the factory, the first official Castello pipe was produced in May 1947.

Scotti bought briar near Genoa in Liguria, a province located on the Ligurian Sea, south of Milan and north of the French island of Corsica. Stones on the beach there are deeply etched by the sand, the sea and time. It was these stones that gave Scotti the idea for a pipe finish that became renowned worldwide as Sea Rock.

To make it, artisans carefully carve or sculpt the pipe surface, using a variety of specially developed tools. The result is a sturdy, beautiful and especially light pipe that has been popular for 50 years.

Despite many new creations, Scotti and Castello had difficult times in the beginning. Several quality pipe manufacturers had started operations in northwest Italy at about the same time, including Savinelli and Brebbia. All were putting special attention on higher quality pipes. And Scotti's pipes were different enough from the more familiar shapes that Italian pipe smokers had a hard time accepting them at first.

Strangely enough, penetration of the Italian market by Castello came through the United States. In 1950, Scotti met U.S. pipe legend Wally Frank in a Milan shop. Frank liked what he saw of Scotti's work and immediately began importing Castello pipes into the United States. The U.S. market responded very favorably, especially to the Sea Rock design.

As a result, in its early days Castello produced 90 percent of its pipes for the U.S. market. This continued until around 1955. Then it was "discovered" in its own country. When Italians traveled in the U.S., they saw the acceptance of the Castello pipes there. After returning to Italy, they

eagerly sought out these "new" pipes. Some of the hardest times were behind the fledgling company.

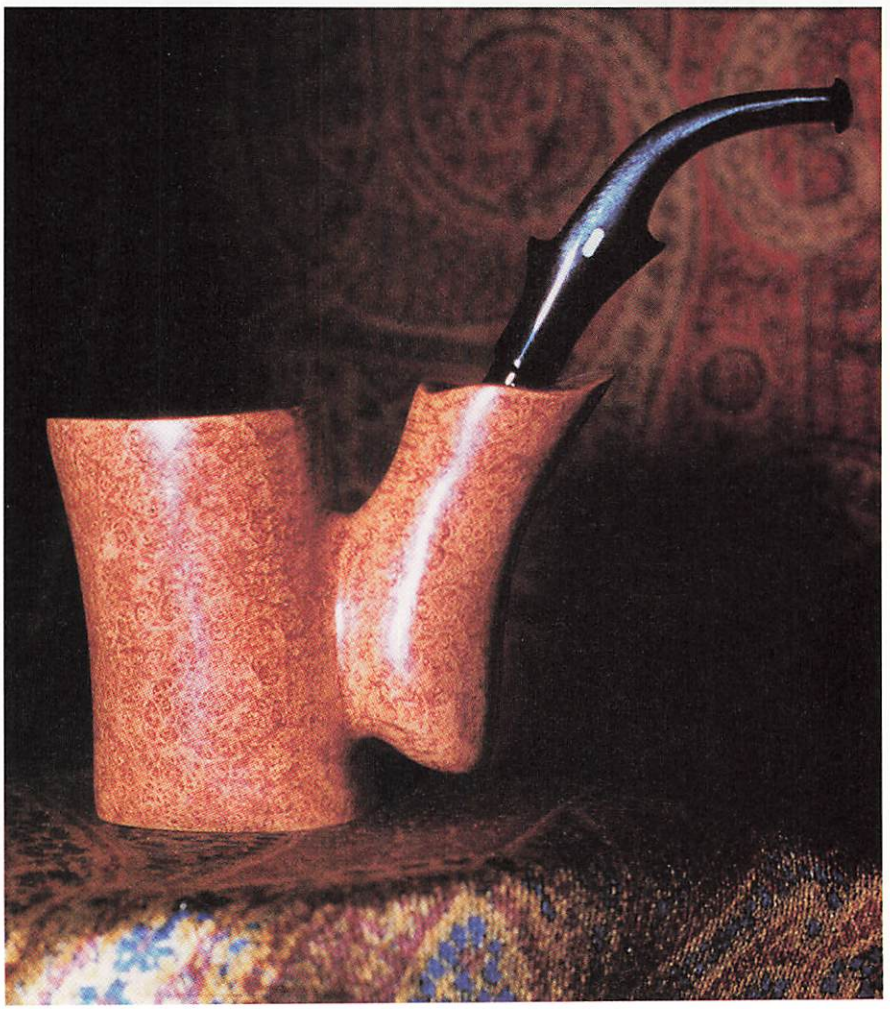
Scotti was tall, unusually tall for those days, standing about six feet tall and very, very thin. It was almost as though the fire in him burned extra flesh off his lean body. As is true with many artists, he was quick-tempered. He demanded perfection in those around him and would not tolerate anything less, which resulted in constant confrontation.

His saving grace was that he pushed individuals to help them learn...to do their best. Loyal and giving to his friends, he was a bear to people he didn't like.

Scotti's profession—the factory—was the driving force in his life. It was the creative outlet for all of the artistic force bottled up within him. It was the focus of everything he did. As such, he expected his co-workers to be as dedicated as he was.

In the beginning, there was only Scotti and Renzo. Then Renzo hired an apprentice. Later, other apprentices were added. Apprentices were typically young boys who worked long hours for a minimum wage in order to learn a trade.

Franco Coppo's first encounter with his father-in-law-to-be happened in Milan. His fiancé, Savina, asked Coppo to come to a restaurant in order to meet her father. "The first thing he asked was, 'Do you want a cup of tea?' After the tea was drunk and the somewhat tense small talk had passed, Scotti said, 'You can walk around



Castello pipes produced through the years vary widely in shape and finish and yet are uniquely Castello. The four pipes below are Great Line Fiammatas, while the group of pipes in the center display the many variations that can result from one general shape. The artistic figure carved some years ago, upper right, shows another side of Castello pipes, as do the three carved pipes in the lower right.

"The uniqueness of Castello is that we produce a pipe without turning the bowl."

the restaurant with my daughter for 30 minutes. Then I have to leave for Cantù. Not more than 30 minutes.' I was so nervous that I had her back in 20 minutes," confessed Coppo.

Coppo's engineering studies were followed by mandatory military service. When he returned, Scotti asked him what he intended to do with his life. Coppo told him he wanted to be involved in mechanical activity, perhaps in a foundry with his father. It was then that Scotti asked him if he would consider becoming a pipemaker. Coppo knew nothing about pipes and said so. "Come to Cantù tomorrow at 2 p.m. and I will show you," countered Scotti.

The next day—a beautiful June day in 1968—Coppo arrived by train in Cantù. Scotti was 66 years old at that time and thinking about the future of the company he had created. He offered Coppo a chance to learn pipemaking; to be, in effect, his right-hand man; to learn all of his secrets and carry on the tradition of Castello pipes.

The use of machinery and working with his hands appealed to Coppo. This, plus an immediate fascination with the shapes of pipes and their creation, resulted in Castello pipes becoming his life's work.

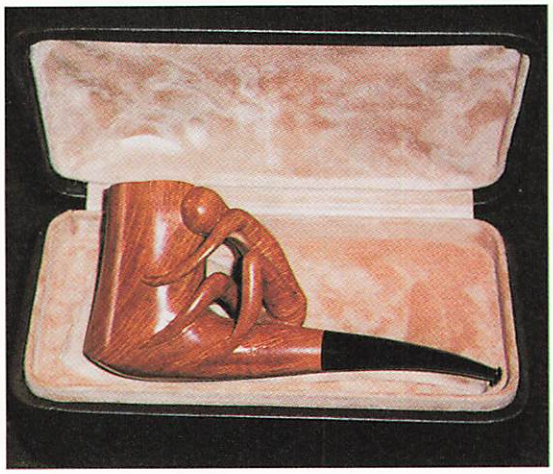
The first two to three years with Castello, Coppo worked full-time in the factory. He started by making mouthpieces. This was followed by polishing bowls and later by creating bowls. It was during this learning period that Coppo and Savina were married, in October 1969.

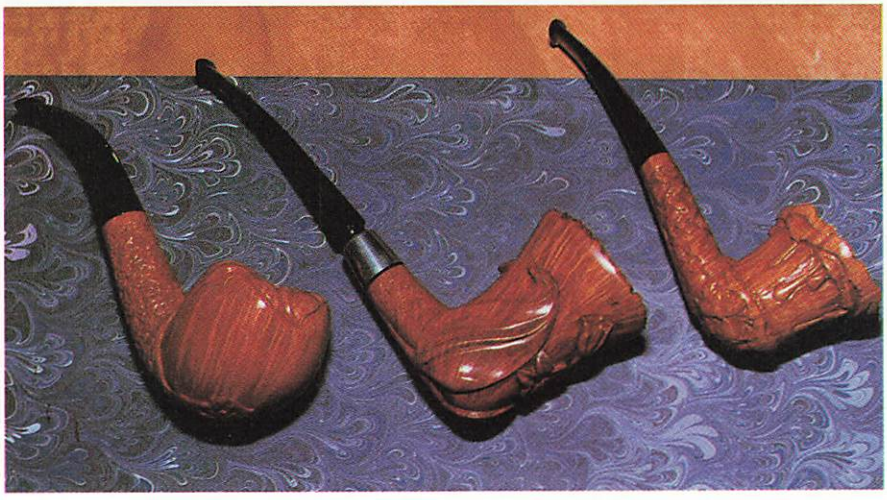
Those were not easy years. As he did with everyone around him, Scotti demanded perfection of Coppo, sometimes in what felt like a huge burst of temper. "But I always knew he did it to help me grow, to develop, to become better," says Coppo.

Scotti, whom Coppo sometimes calls grandfather as an honorific, was an artist. The creation of a pipe could hold his attention only until he had captured the shape that existed in his mind. Then he was finished with it and on to another project. Someone else would have to complete the details—sanding and polishing. For Scotti, the form was paramount—the creative moment.

Early Castello pipes were very similar to those produced at the time by Dunhill. Then, gradually, new shapes appeared. In addition to the Sea Rock, two other rusticated or carved forms of pipes appeared—Candle Drip and Shingles. In addition to the classical shapes, more and more freehand pipes began to appear.

"The uniqueness of Castello is that we produce a pipe without turning the bowl," says Coppo. "The difference is immediately evident to the eye when compared to a machine-made pipe. When you smoke it, you can taste the difference in the briar. In addition, all of our stains are





made from products that exist in nature—natural products like plants and dried insects, so when you smoke the pipe you taste the fragrance of the briar and not other bad tastes.

"We don't have a shape chart, because every pipe is different in some way from all other Castello pipes. Whether a pipe is classic, fantasy, bent or straight, for us there is no difference. Then we adorn the shape. Sometimes with gold or silver; sometimes with a precious stone around the stem. The result is fantastic! There is a beautiful shape in every Castello pipe."

To produce a perfect pipe, the briar must be perfect, according to Coppo. He looks at the grain, the composition of the wood, the weight, before buying briar. The chosen briar is then stored in a special room without light. There it experiences the seasons. In the winter, the air is drier and colder. In the summer, there is higher temperature and higher humidity. "Do you understand?" asks Coppo. "Our whole approach is natural."

When the briar is ready, it is brought to the floor of the factory to acclimatize it before it is worked. Twice a year it is turned over to rotate the blocks. When the blocks are finally ready to work, years after their purchase, three important machines are used. One drills the smoke chamber, another drills the air passage, and the third bores the hole in each mouthpiece.

"So we immediately bring together the bowl and the mouthpiece. We use the process to work with a piece of briar that is stopped, not turned. This is special with Castello pipes. This is important because the artisan in every moment decides what shape to produce from each piece of briar."

A unique aspect of production is that the six artisans who turn out the approximately 5,000 pipes a year truly work as a team. Each pipe passes through the hands of each of the six pipemakers. Each adds his own vision and refinement.

"Each member of the team is a professional. But each pair of eyes sees a piece of briar differently. In this way we can have a great familiarity together. It is also a philosophy of work. I don't work by myself. I work on a team, a team that is like family. Every artisan helps the other artisans at all times," says Coppo.

Creation of a pipe is reached through several consecutive steps:

1. Coppo selects the briar and it is dried naturally.

2. Coppo selects the specific briar blocks to be worked and assigns a specific shape for each block.

3. The briar block is bored. The smoke chamber is bored first. The air passage is bored through the stem next. This requires two passes.

4. The mouthpiece is immediately fitted on

the stem. Stem and mouthpiece then remain mated throughout the creative process. Other than drilling the air passage, the mouthpiece is worked entirely by hand.

5. An artisan begins to shape the pipe with a sanding disk. When a pipe gets to the third level of sanding and shaping, it is lightly polished. At this stage, it is possible to see the grain and the nature of the briar. If the grain is excellent, it becomes a smooth, polished pipe. If the grain is not too good, it is sandblasted and called Old Antiquari (antiquity). If the grain is good, but lacking aesthetically, it becomes a sculpted Sea Rock.

6. Smooth pipes go through three more levels of sandpaper until they reach the very finest paper.

7. A stain is applied, if necessary, to bring out the beauty of the briar. Some stains are dark. Others are very light and buffed away until only the grain is accented.

8. The polishing process starts with pumice and is followed by five buffing steps and application of carnauba wax.

9. The pipes are then polished a last time by hand and set aside to wait for an order from a customer.

10. When orders arrive, Coppo personally grades each pipe and stamps it before shipment.

After step 5 above, if a pipe is to become a Sea Rock, many additional steps are required:

First, hand tools, specially made by Castello, are used to carve the surface of the smooth bowl and shank. Six different tools have been created and several are used in making each Sea Rock pipe.

Second, three different shapes of wire brushes, with varying levels of stiffness, are used to create the perfect texture.

Third, the pipe is buffed both prior to and after staining.

Fourth, the pipe joins others at step 9 above.

The extra steps necessary to make a Sea Rock approximately double the time invested into each pipe because of all of the creative handwork required.

Standards are so high that this process produces only between 100 and 120 Great Line pipes a year, out of the 5,000 pipes created. Of the rest, about 20 percent become Sea Rock; 10 percent become Old Antiquari (sandblasted). The other 70 percent are finished smooth, including the Great Line. For a special touch, precious stone is used on the stem, but for only 50 to 60 pipes a year.

One of the early contributions Coppo made to Castello was the beginnings of organization. For example, for many years Castello had no grade indicators. In the 1970s, Coppo created a grading system based on the letter K. Lower grade pipes are graded primarily by size. This is indicated with the smallest pipes receiving one K,

while the largest ones receive either four K's or a G. The G (and sometimes GG) is awarded to the very largest pipes, or giants.

For smooth pipes in the Collection and Collection Great Line Series, the K's indicated primarily beauty and grain, with much less dependency on size. (For examples, see the nomenclature box at the end of this article.)

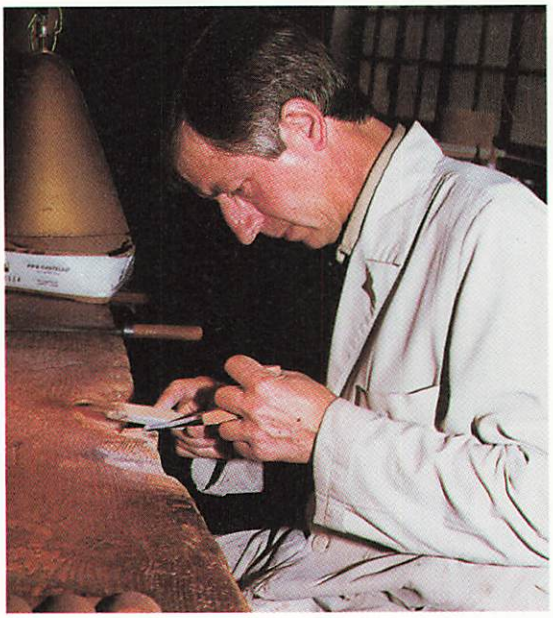
The origin of the letter K comes back to Coppo. His first name is Franco. The diminutive form of his name is Frankino. The shortened version or nickname is Kino, the source of the K in the grading system.

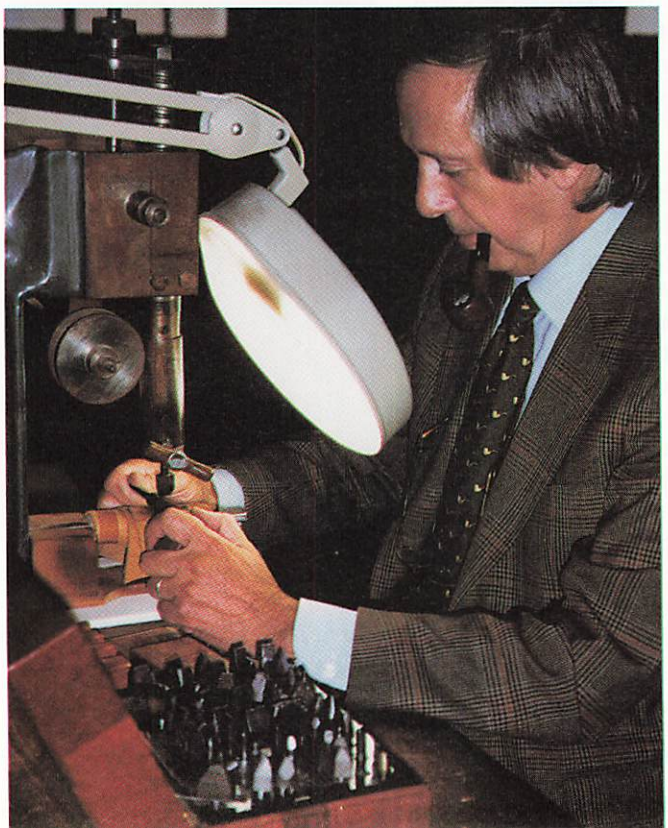
When Coppo grades pipes, he is constantly looking for outstanding examples. When each pipe is created entirely by hand, the basic shapes change slightly over time. The examples are kept to remind everyone of the best possible directions. When a better pipe comes along, it replaces the old one and becomes the model. As a result, the Castello special showroom is a pipe lover's delight. Hundreds of the most incredible pipes rest there, waiting to inspire.

Carlo Scotti worked in his factory for 43 years, to within a week of his death on October 28, 1988. He had devoted the last half of his life to his all-consuming passion of making pipes. Scotti's love of pipemaking was internalized by son-in-law Franco Coppo, who has already devoted 31 years of his life to turning briar into objects both beautiful and functional—a source of pleasure for pipe smokers worldwide.

The success of Castello has not changed its pipes. In spite of burgeoning demand for the last 25 years, the company has refused to gear up for greater production numbers. The ultimate goal is still to produce the best pipes in the world, without undue outside influence. To this end, Coppo will not visit the workshops of other pipemakers. It is important to him to keep the Castello vision firmly in his mind and to create from that original vision.

Dedication, creativity, focus and determination both built and sustain the work force of Castello as they produce their famous pipes. They are proud that their pipes are one of the standards of excellence against which the industry judges itself. But it is more important to each and every person in Castello that they do their best...reach that inner standard that each person carries in his head, and his heart. *P&T*





Making Castello pipes is an affair of the heart. It begins with the selection of the best available briar. Franco Coppo, head of Castello, takes pride in the fact that all Castello pipes are created by hand and that none are turned. Shapes are created on sanding discs. Likewise, the Lucite mouthpieces are created individually by hand. Grading and stamping are done by Coppo just before shipment.

50th Anniversary Jubilee

Devotees of Castello pipes met September 26, 1997, to celebrate the company's 50th anniversary. The event was held in the restored 11th century villa owned by the Circolo della Pipa, a pipe club based in Rome. The event was hosted by Franco Coppo, head of Castello, and his daughter Stephanie.

Attendees included Castello collectors, politicians, the media, actors and others, totaling 30 distinguished guests.

The center of attention was the simple but elegant Jubilee pipe, whose shape and design echoes the years spent creating outstanding Castello pipes. The slight forward cant of the bowl emphasizes its very clean lines. Its special leather-clad carrying case furthered the historic emphasis.

The pipe was dedicated by Coppo to the memory of Castello founder Carlo Scotti, "whose illustrious memories we cannot and should not forget." It was also dedicated to all the people who have made the name of Castello famous, from the artisans who create the pipes to the pipe lovers who buy and enjoy them.

With each pipe is enclosed an anniversary announcement that includes the following pledge:

"We rededicate ourselves to four simple rules: Work only and exclusively with the best briar; work it at the correct moment; work it with due respect for its functionality and good taste; work it with artistic responsibility; but above all, put our hearts into it."

A special stained-glass and wood centerpiece reflected the focus of Castello, featuring pipes of various sizes and shapes and the company logo in the shape of a castle outline, complete with crenelated battlements. In its interior was, fittingly, a piece of briar, with its cut side polished, supporting a Castello pipe.

In addition to the Jubilee pipe in its many different finishes, other special Castello pipes rounded out the display.

A group of pipe lovers, above, celebrated the 50th Anniversary Jubilee of Castello, where the limited edition, numbered anniversary pipes were introduced. The design is simple and classic. It is small by modern U.S. standards, measuring 5.25 inches long, 1.75 inches tall, with a five-eighths-inch diameter tobacco chamber. However, its size is in keeping with European pipes of the past and today. It was graded with the original classification that existed 50 years ago: SA, SB, SC and SS.

Castello Nomenclature

Castello pipes are graded using primarily the letter K. A pipe can have one to four K's, depending on the series, as indicated below. In addition, some series have an additional size G for giganti, or large, for a maximum of five grades. In the lower-quality pipes, these grades refer primarily to size. In the Collection, Collection Fiammata, Collection Great Line and Collection Great Line Fiammata Series, the number of K's reflect the beauty and level of perfection of the pipe, rather than just size. SRP refers to the suggested retail price. Actual retail prices may vary widely.)

Rusticated: There are two lines of carved or rusticated pipes—Sea Rock and Natural Vergin. Sea Rock is the lowest Castello grade and the most common in the U.S. Colors are generally black, with a few other colors available, such as brown and red. Available in five sizes. Natural Vergin is the same as Sea Rock in all elements, except it retains its natural briar color, neither stained nor waxed. SRP starts at $275 for both lines.

Sandblasted: Old Antiquari. Available in colors ranging from light tan to medium rusty brown with an occasional black piece with red highlights. Five sizes. SRP starts at $275.

Trade Mark: The lowest grade of the smooth pipes. Usually stained red. Five sizes. SRP starts at $375. The Great Line version starts at $475.

Castello: This series ranks between Trade Mark and Collection. It can vary in color from a light natural color to a dark two-tone. A smooth finish, usually in classical shapes. Five sizes. This series is not common in the U.S. SRP starts at $475.

Perla Nera: Smooth finish. A "dress" pipe with a deep black finish. A rare pipe. One size only. SRP starts at $500.

(Note: Above this point, grades refer almost entirely to size, ranging from small (K) to large (KKKK or G). From this point forth, the same grade indicators refer primarily to quality—beauty and grain.)

Collection: This series is the highest grade of Castello pipes in classical shapes. Available in four grades. SRP starts at $475. Collection Fiammata is the same as Collection, except all straight grain. Classical shapes in four different grades. SRP starts at $1,000.

Castello Serie Pezzi "Storici": Freehand pipes of the highest quality, available in two categories. The first is Collection Great Line, available in four grades. SRP starts at $850. The second is Collection Great Line Fiammata (straight grain), available in three grades. SRP of Collection Great Line Fiammata is $1,250.

Castello Serie "Preziosa": Limited edition pipes with precious stone rings on the stems. Available in the Sea Rock, Old Antiquari and Collection lines. Because of rarity, there is no SRP for these pipes.

Epoca: Carved or rusticated pipes in three formats: dripped wax, rock style and shingle style. Generally not available in the U.S. No SRP set in the U.S.

Bamboo Series: Standard pipe series to which bamboo has been added. Seldom available in the U.S. No SRP set in the U.S.

Special additions: A number of additions are available on Castello pipes at extra cost, such as accent bars in briar on the mouthpiece and extensions to the stem. A beautiful example of a stem extension (flock) is a sterling silver, ornate ring with two feet or fins. These fold out of the ring and hold the pipe steady with its bowl in an upright position.

Logo: The European Castello mark, or logo, is a long, white, vertical bar with rounded corners inset into the mouthpiece. Originally ivory, it is now made of Lucite. In the United States, a small, round diamond-like logo is used. This change was made years ago, when Castellos were first imported into the U.S. At that time, there was another pipe line, now defunct, that used a similar white bar logo.

Distribution: Castello pipes are available through tobacconists throughout the country. For the name of the tobacconist nearest to you that handles Castellos, contact the distributor: Hollco/Rohr, 20717 Marilla St., Chatsworth, CA 91311. Telephone: 800.24SMOKE (800.247.6653). Fax: 818.885.7473.

Fine Art

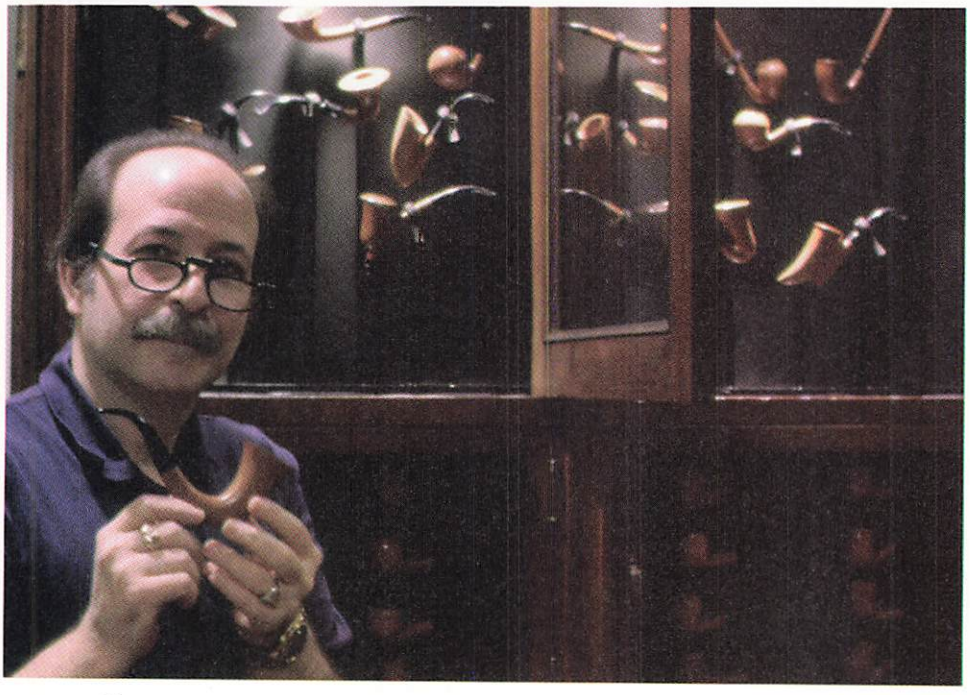
Classically trained artist combines sculpting with pipemaking for museum-quality instruments of smoke and beauty

by Chuck Stanion

Edward Burak is a pipe designer. And an artist. A purist, an art instructor, a historian—all held together with a childlike joy in everything around him. One thing he is not, however, is a salesman. He doesn't have to be; he imbues his pipes with the ability to sell themselves.

When Burak presents a particular pipe for examination, he does not look at the pipe; he watches his audience—the client—for signs of appreciation, understanding, perhaps even worthiness. "I know that not everyone who buys my pipes will understand the design that goes into them," he says. "Maybe on a subconscious level they'll appreciate it, but as long as they enjoy it, that's fine."

Of Russian and Austrian heritage, Burak was a child prodigy, painting by the time he was 3 years old. His work was featured in his own art exhibit on Madison Avenue when he was 15. "I never thought about wanting to be an artist," he says. "It was in my nature. It's who I was, who I am."



As a pipe smoker by age 14, it was natural that his artistic aptitude would apply itself to his interest in pipes. Still, he was in his early 20s before he discovered that pipe design would be his primary artistic outlet.

At age 22, he needed a meerschaum pipe repaired and went to the studio of Viennese pipemaker Paul Fisher to inquire about it. He stayed five years. "I worked basically for nothing," says Burak. "I was an apprentice in the Old World sense of the concept."

He moved on to Wally Frank Ltd., where he designed pipes until taking over the Connoisseur Pipe Shop in New York City in 1968.

You will not find cigars or cigarettes in the Connoisseur Pipe Shop. Nor will you find pewter dragons, greeting cards—not even smoking accessories. You can't buy a pipe lighter there.

"Lighters," says Burak, "are responsible for destroying more pipes than any

other ignition system." It is too easy to char the edge of the bowl with lighters. Burak recommends matches or, if you are careful, a regular butane lighter (not a pipe lighter) with a very low flame. "Hold the flame over the tobacco and draw it down with your breath," he says. "Lighters that shoot a flame down into the bowl are horrible."

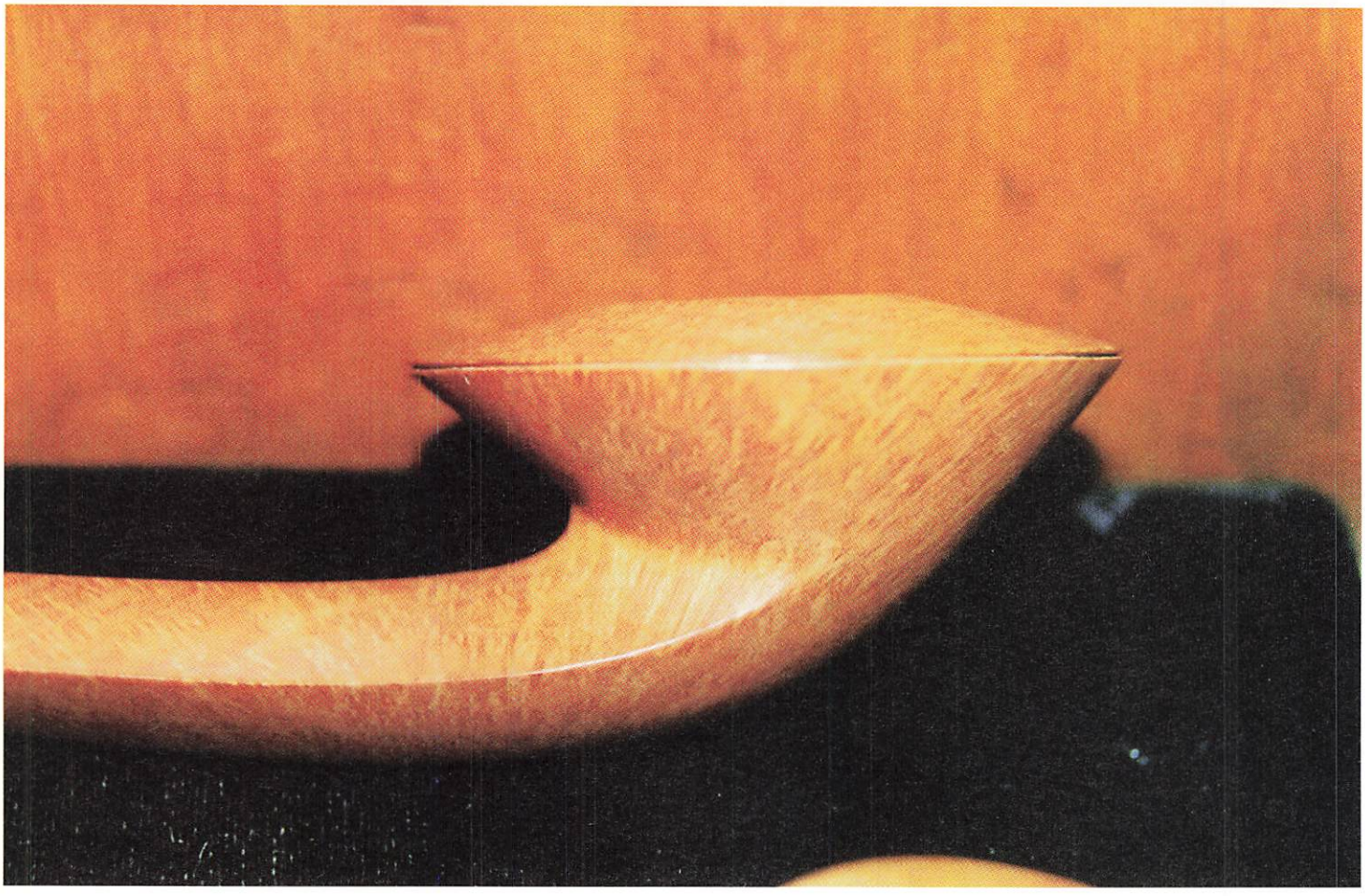
About the only thing you can purchase other than beautiful pipes in Burak's shop is pipe tobacco. But not the mass-distributed tinned and bulk tobaccos you might find at most tobacco shops. Only 13 blends are offered at the Connoisseur, all developed by Burak himself. "I found that 13 are enough," he says. "There's enough variation in those 13 blends for anyone." From subtle aromatics, to Scottish, Turkish, and pure Havana seed blends, in a variety of cuts and strengths, the Connoisseur shop offers a premium smoking experience. And it is not just the blending, says Burak, but the aging of those blends that is important.

"Tobacco blends should age at least 10 months before going on the shelf and being offered for sale," says Burak. "Everything here has been aged a minimum of 10 months; some quite longer."

But, as inspiring as his tobacco blends are, it is the Connoisseur pipe that makes this shop so impressive.

Located on the concourse level of the Paine-Weber Building in New York, the Connoisseur Pipe Shop is small, understated and filled with pipes like you have never seen elsewhere. Except, perhaps, in museums. The American Craft Museum included Connoisseur pipes in its 1990 tour, so Burak's work has been seen in France, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, Spain, Greece and dozens of other countries. And 14 of his designs can be found in the Museum of Modern Art as well.

The best place to see these pipes, however, is in the shop, with the artist showing them. Because when Burak shows you a pipe, he also offers you insights into art history, with classical references to design, architecture, music, sculpture, painting. When you look at a pipe with Ed Burak, you find yourself absorbing some of his enthusiasm and walking away with a better appreciation for art. You see everything around you in sharper focus; the world looks a little newer. Because these pipes are so different, so



carefully crafted, they not only please the eye, but educate it.

Burak doesn't carve his own pipes; he designs them and commissions their final carving by experienced craftsmen. "The design is all done on paper," he says. "These are one-of-a-kind pieces, with some designs taking six months to lay out." The carvers execute Burak's designs to exacting detail. They then send the pipes to Burak, who inspects them, measures, marks what changes are necessary, and sends them back. This exchange goes on until the pipes are perfect.

What makes this process so dramatically different is that the pipes produced are exactly what Burak envisions. Most pipemakers will start with an idea and work the wood toward that goal, but will change their original design to accomodate the briar. Burak does not allow the medium to modify the intent. Minor surface flaws are left on the pipes. No staining is permitted; all Connoisseurs have a natural finish, with only carnauba wax added.

That is not to say that the briar is unimportant to Burak. "I don't even bother with anything but the finest materials." Only fine aged Grecian or Corsican briar is utilized.

Just because museums like to display them doesn't mean their primary purpose should be forgotten. These pipes are meant to be held and smoked and enjoyed. It is not just how they look, but how they feel, how they impact on the smoking experience that is important to Burak.

The lines and angles and dimensions and gravitational mass all dictate how one

The above pipes were featured in an American Craft Museum announcement of an exhibition of Burak's pipe designs.

should hold and smoke a pipe. The final sculpture, after all, is not complete until the smoker is added to the equation. Details of design interrelate to form the whole of the pipe, but pipe and smoker must also interrelate. So although Burak is highly concerned with design, he is also acutely aware of the characteristics of his briar.

He prefers, for example, cross grains to straight grains. "Cross grains are more interesting," he says. "There are whole worlds to be seen in cross grains."

Straight grains, says Burak, are overrated. "They really just started as an arbitrary selling point for manufacturers. The idea that straight grains are superior, or more beautiful, is ridiculous. It was carried to an extreme by Charatan. But Dunhill, for example, never went along with it."

There are some straight grains, however, to be found in his shop. The Connoisseur Straight Grain Original, for example, which is a good seller.

There is a little of everything in his shop; more than an initial impression conveys. In fact, the majority of his pipes aren't even out in the open—they are nestled in drawers—dozens of pipes to the drawer in the antique display cases that range along the left wall of the shop. Hundreds of pipes, in all shapes and prices, from $27.50 for Connoisseur Irregulars to $6,000 for top-quality sculptures.

"The difference between art and 'not-art,'" says Burak, "is ethics. In every great work of art you see ethics." He uses Shaker furniture as an example. "There is craftsmanship in Shaker furniture," he says, "that is unnecessary, that no one would see if they weren't looking for it. But the quality is there because it should be there. That is what I mean by ethics.

"An object is perceived in time—the eye takes in one part quickly, another takes longer to see, according to the lines and shapes. My work takes all that into account." *P&T*

Nomenclature

For the first three years of production, Burak's pipes were unmarked. Since the early 1970s, they have been marked with the name of the shop, and with the Ed Burak signature. The stampings do not indicate year or grade.

Connoisseur Pricing:

Standard Shapes	$75-$125
Featherweights	$125-$200
Desktop Pipes (self-standing)	$125-$200
Connoisseur Originals	$125-$150
Classics	$125-$225
One-of-a-kind Originals	$275-$6,000

Catalogs are available. Send requests to:

The Connoisseur Pipe Shop
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Concourse Level
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Or you may request a catalog by phone. Call between the hours of 10:15 and 5:45 only, Monday through Friday. Do not leave catalog requests on the answering machine. Call 212.247.6054.

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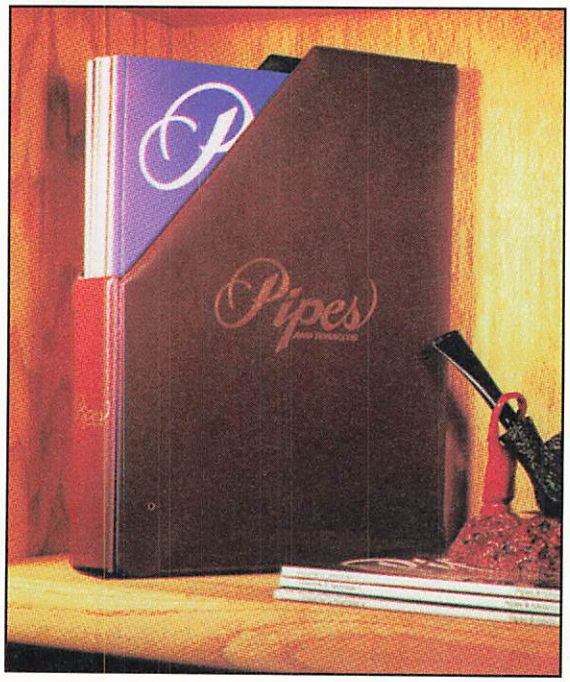

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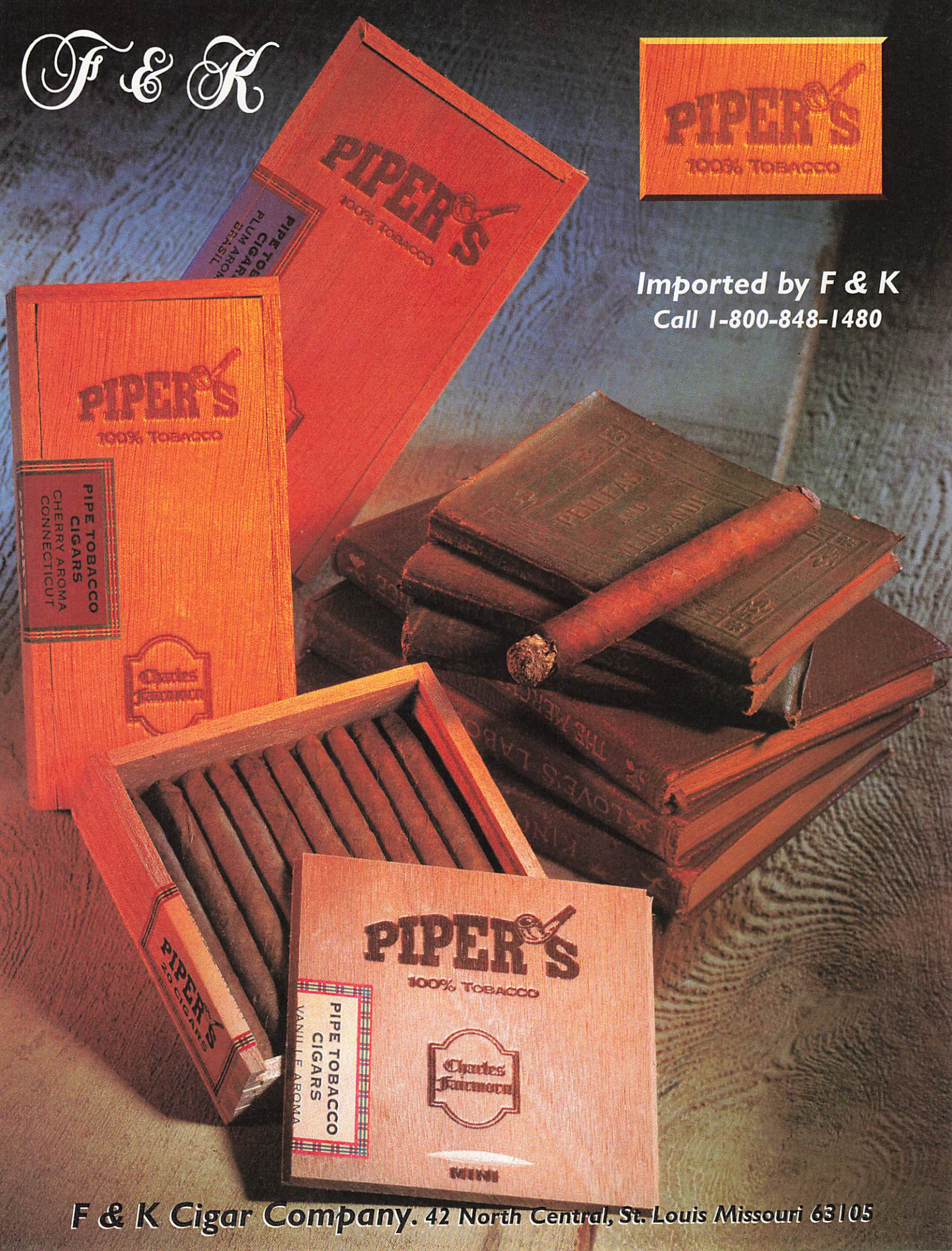
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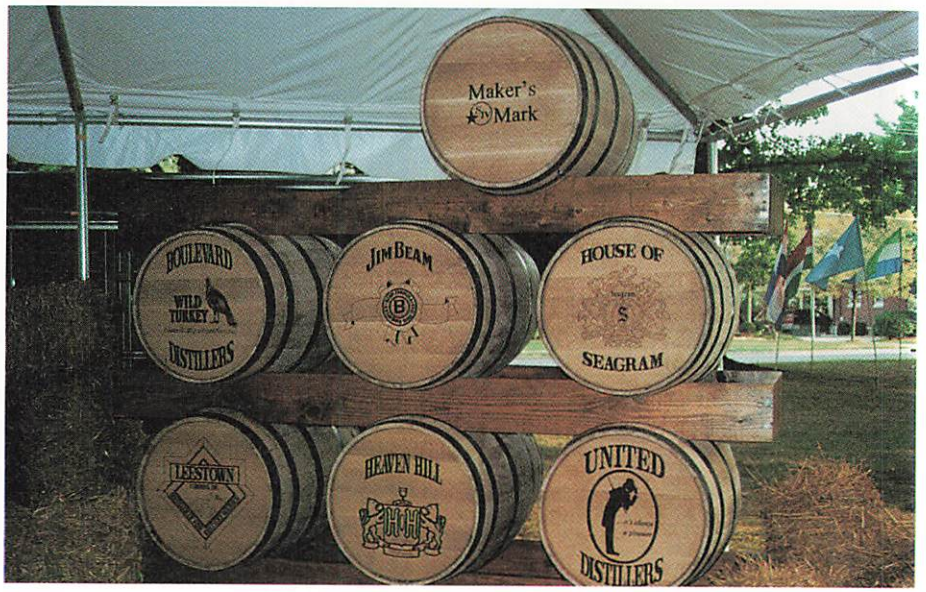
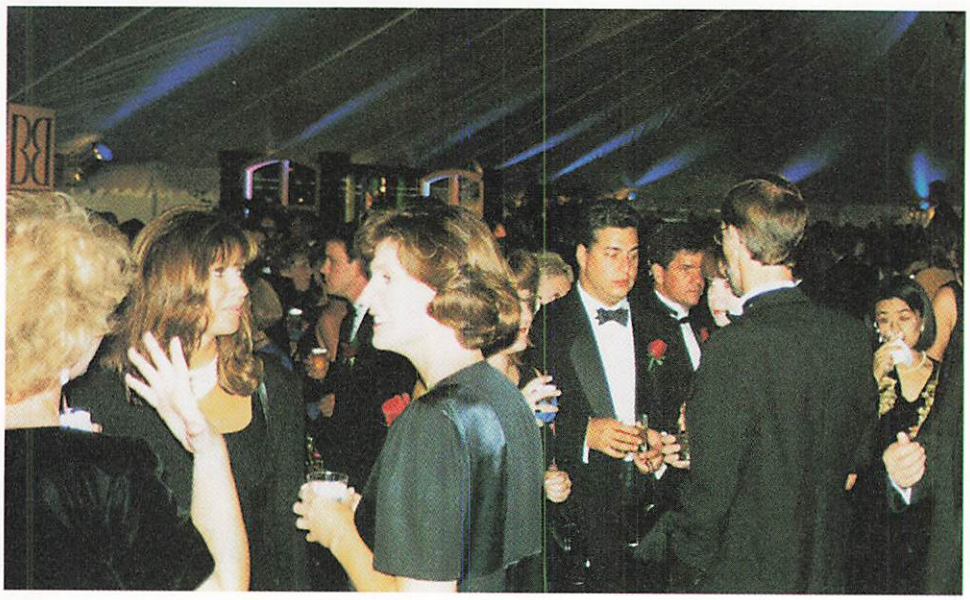
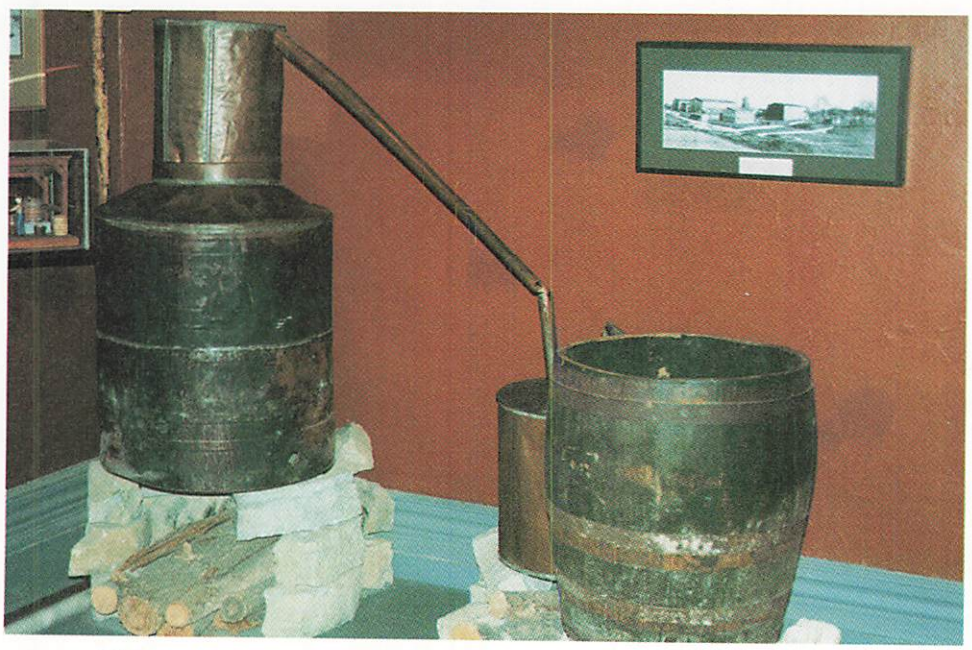
Kentucky Bourbon Festival



There's nothing like great tobacco in a great pipe enhanced by great whiskey





Most pipe smokers appreciate a beverage of some sort while enjoying their pipes. Wine, beer, ginseng tea, orange-and-clam juice, sardine squeezings on ice—everyone has their own favorite. But of enormous constant popularity among smokers is a traditional American favorite: bourbon.

Well, if it's bourbon you like, the 1997 Kentucky Bourbon Festival held in Bardstown, Kentucky, last September would have been the perfect place for you to try a few dozen varieties of this preferred beverage. The nine-day festival featured tours, displays, gourmet food, competitions, music, tastings and everything you can imagine relating to bourbon.

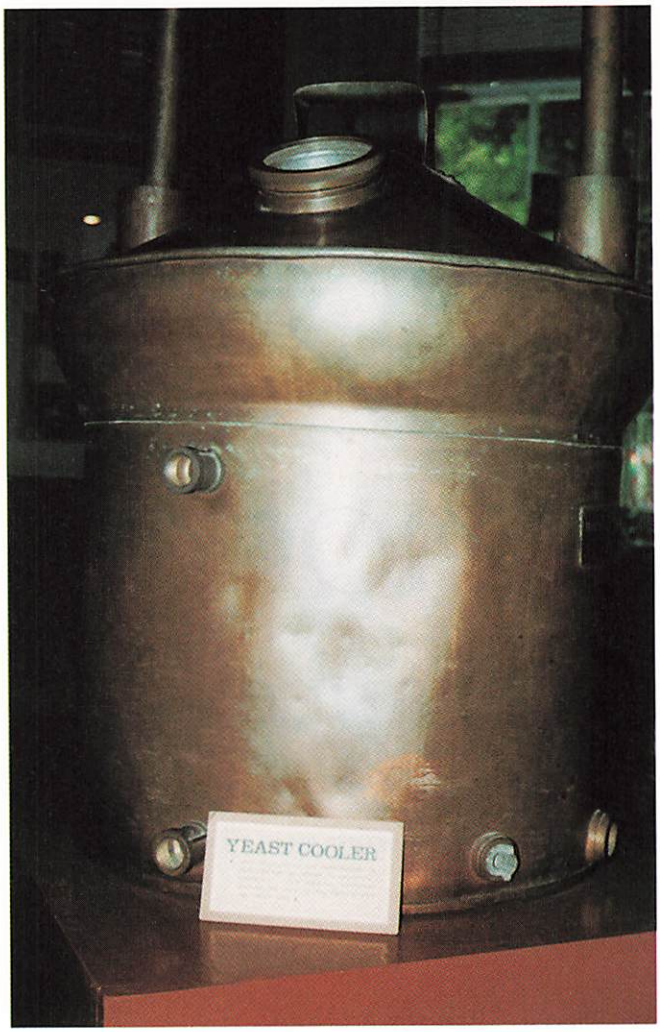
An estimated 25,000 people converged on Bardstown for the festivities. And not just adults—it had a county-fair atmosphere, with enough fun and interesting activities to keep the whole family well occupied.

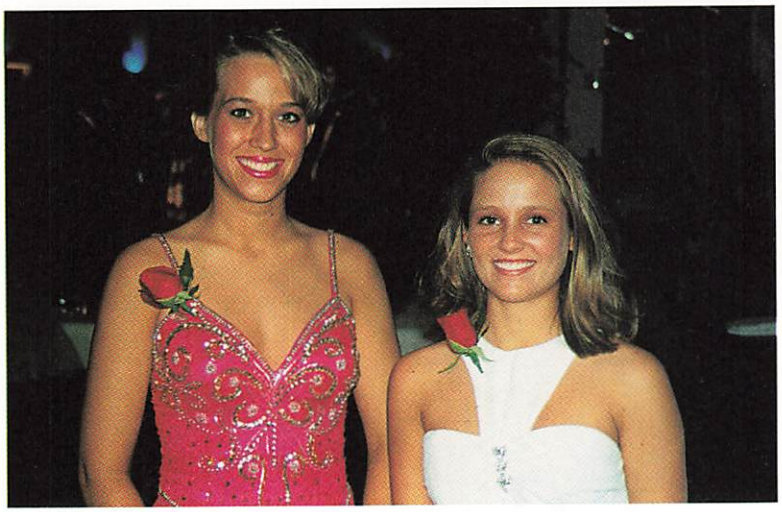
Area cocktail waiters and waitresses participated in the Sour Mash Shuffle, a race of speed and precision in which they carried to the finish line—what else?—bourbon!

Cooking was an important subject throughout the festival, with lessons and demonstrations of how to use bourbon to create gourmet cuisine.

Seminars on the history and making of bourbon provided in-depth understanding of the processes that coordinate in producing this Kentucky resource.

For music lovers, both rock and country concerts were provided. For



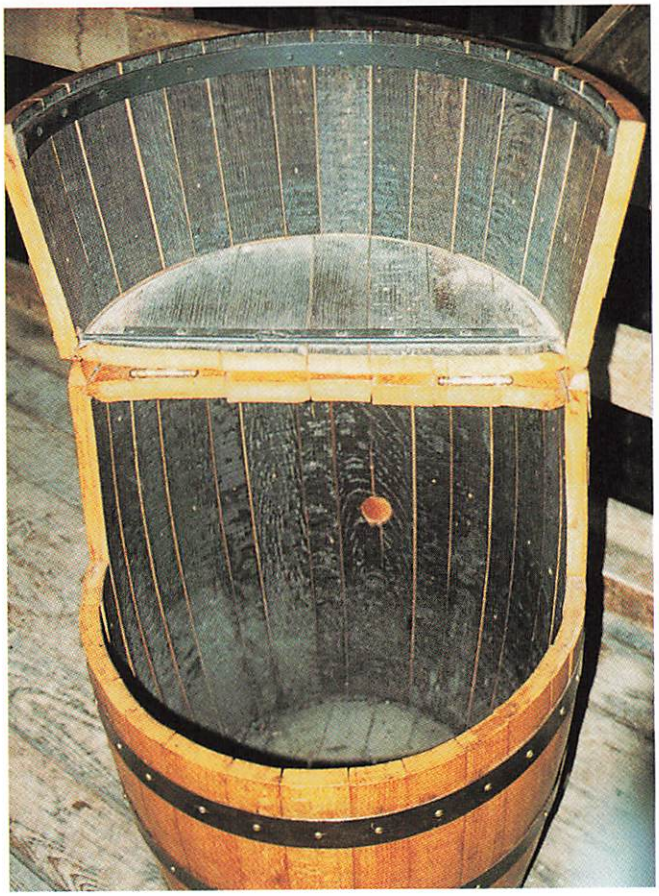


action lovers, there was the World's Championship Bourbon Barrel Relay. For antique lovers, there were tours of the Oscar Getz Museum of Whiskey History, as well as antiques and collectibles displays. And for those who like a formal night out, the Great Kentucky Bourbon Tasting and Gala was the swankiest event of the festival.

More than a thousand people attended the Gala, all in formal attire. Excellent food, music and bourbon punctuated the evening.

But really, just what is bourbon, aside from being a fine complement to a pipe? According to government definitions and standards, bourbon is a fermented mash made up of a minimum of 51 percent corn. The distilled spirit must be 80 percent alcohol (160 proof) and stored in charred white oak barrels for at least two years.

And what is the best bourbon to enjoy with a pipe? We at *P&T* are drinking and smoking from morning to night to make that determination and offer the most informed recommendation possible. In the meantime, mark your calendar for the next Kentucky Bourbon Festival, September 12 through September 20, 1998, in Bardstown, Kentucky. *P&T*



Blowing Smoke
Tobacco and Tolerance

Tobacco is not, properly speaking, a social problem at all, but the growing anti-smoking movement is quickly becoming one

Reprinted from *The Economist*

One began to suspect that the attack on smoking in America—the industrial world's leading moral exporter—was escalating rather out of hand when in 1996 the attorney general of Texas announced, apparently in all seriousness, that "history will record the modern-day tobacco industry alongside the worst of civilization's evil empires"; when a *New York Times* book reviewer suggested that "only slavery exceeds tobacco as a curse on American history"; when an anti-tobacco activist and plaintiff called tobacco firms "the most criminal, disgusting, sadistic, degenerate group of people on the face of the earth." Not long ago an earnest young American assured this newspaper that breathing other people's smoke is morally equivalent to being sprayed with machine-gun fire. Your correspondent (a non-smoker) was reduced to an undignified gape.

The Economist is all in favour of the occasional moral crusade, provided popcorn is sold. Certainly, smoking is a messy and short-sighted habit, and tobacco companies are not particularly nice. Lately, however, the attack on tobacco has crossed the admittedly fuzzy line that distinguishes moral enthusiasm from illiberal vindictiveness, and at such a time good fun should yield to good thinking. Most people in America and Europe would agree, without a second thought, that smoking is a public health problem. But is this really so?

Smoking undoubtedly warrants some modest public measures, most of which have already been taken in the industrialized countries: moderate tobacco taxes, public education, and prevention of unreasonable nuisance to non-smokers. But smoking is not like tuberculosis or air pollution or drunken driving; it is not, strictly speaking, a public-health or public-safety problem at all. Rather, like motorcycling or overeating or skiing, it is a private health problem. To be specific, it is a problem for smokers. In seeking to obliterate this point, the anti-smoking crusade is in imminent danger of becoming a campaign against liberal principles, which is to say, a campaign of intolerance.

It is time for a rethink from first premises. The argument that follows focuses primarily on America, where anti-smoking fervour has reached a high pitch; but the principles apply everywhere.

Privacy and puffery

In 1690, John Locke remade society with a revolutionary claim, which was that just because something may improve people's lives does not give a government the proper authority to do it. Undoubtedly, he said, it is good for people to believe in the true religion (the Church of England, of course); but the magistrate, he added, nonetheless, "has no commission, no right," to enforce proper piety. The point he was making is the foundation-stone of toleration in particular and of liberal government in general: that there is a private sphere which governments may not invade, even for the obvious benefit of those affected. A goodly share of today's anti-smoking rhetoric is crafted to fudge this principle, or to drown it out with indignant noise.

To be a problem for somebody, an act need only be problematic. But to be a problem for society—a public concern, as liberalism would define one—it must either harm unconsenting people or entail perils which the practitioner himself cannot reasonably understand and avoid. Moreover, governments cannot regulate even harmful behaviour wantonly, but

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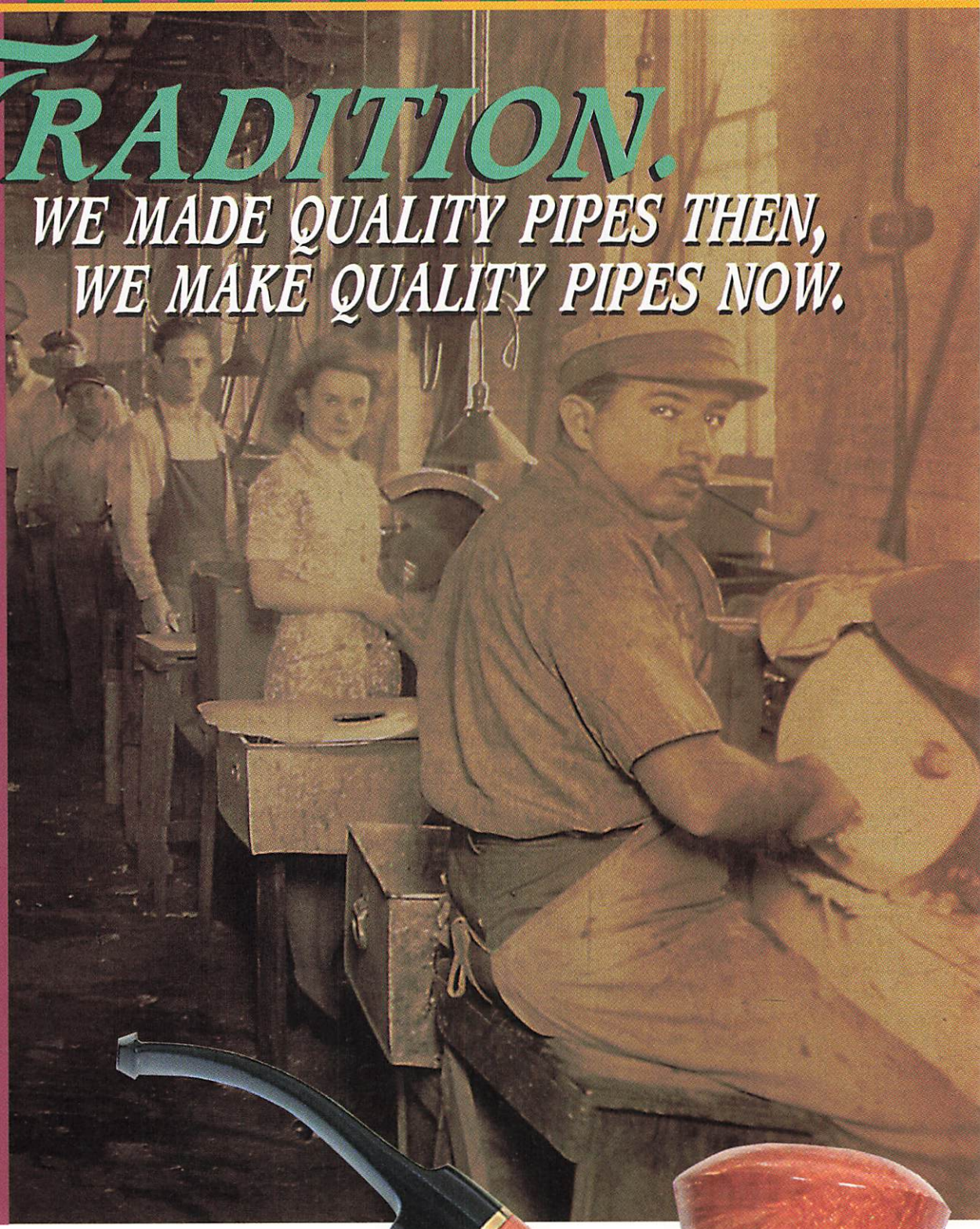

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must settle for the narrowest restrictions that alleviate the harm or protect potential victims. Once government has punished drunken drivers and publicised the hazards of drink, it should not go on to ban alcohol or require distillers to pay for new public hospitals.

To turn smoking into a public-health crusade, then, anti-smokers need to do more than say that smoking is stupid and that fewer people should do it. So they respond with a string of claims intended to drag smoking into the realm of public authority. None is strong.

To begin with, they note that smoking is a needless and common cause of illness and death. But by itself this proves nothing. People take such risks all the time. Motorcycling is about 16 times more dangerous than driving a car; but a motorcyclist will tell you that the pleasure of wind in the hair and a powerful engine between the thighs is worth the risk. Smoking, which can both soothe and stimulate, entails just the same sort of risk-for-pleasure trade.

The public-health rhetoric often implies that smoking must be daft, because it is deadly. In fact, most smokers (two-thirds or more) do not die of smoking-related disease. They gamble and win. Moreover, the years lost to smoking come from the end of life, when people are most likely to die of something else anyway. Bill Clinton's mother, who died of cancer at the age of 70 after smoking two packs a day for most of her life, might, as Mr. Clinton notes, have extended her life by not smoking; but she might also have extended it by eating better or exercising more, and in any case she could never have been sure. From a moral point of view smoking is a lot like eating a fatty diet (and note that sticking to a rigorous low-fat diet is at least as hard as quitting nicotine). Smoking may deserve friendly criticism, but it does not warrant moral indignation, any more than skiing does, and no more is it anyone else's affair.

Those fatal fumes

Ah, but what if non-smokers are involuntarily exposed to wafting clouds of ghastly gas? Anti-smokers understandably rush to emphasise the risks of so-called passive smoking, or external tobacco smoke. But secondhand smoke is less harmful to them than they believe.

For one thing, they commonly exaggerate its dangers, or to be more precise, they exaggerate the extent to which it is known to do much harm at all. Two years ago, America's Congressional Research Service noted that only seven of the 34 studies then available found statistically significant health effects from passive smoking, and one of those found that the effect is positive—ie, that passive smoking is good for you. Of course, it is not really good for you: the real point is that its effects are so small as to be hard to pin down with any certainty at all. Moreover, to find consistently measurable effects, you have to study spouses who live day in and day out with a heavy smoker for many years, something that adults presumably do more or less voluntarily. Evidence of medical harm from the stray wisp of smoke in a workplace or restaurant remains vanishingly thin.

However, let us grant that secondhand smoke is probably a small health hazard; in any case, it is certainly a smelly nuisance. Here the solution is obvious; where people object to smoke, restrict smoking to unbothersome places. With the possible exception of children and spouses of smokers (who put up with each other's offensive habits of every sort, and presumably are best left to sort out such problems among themselves), segregating smokers wholly solves the passive-smoke problem. In America and increasingly in Europe, smoking is commonly restricted to separate areas. End of problem.

Anti-smokers have become fond of arguing that nothing short of a total ban on smoking in all places of work will do, since separate smoking areas still leave some workers, such as waiters and bartenders, exposed to fumes. But it is not reasonable to demand that every risk or inconvenience be eliminated from every workplace or public area, for that is an unending and ultimately quite radical project. Some drinkers will choose to patronise smoky bars, and some bartenders will be glad to work there. This should be allowed.

Anti-smokers next point out that smokers cost society money. Smokers use publicly financed medical care, they take leave for illness, they burn down the odd building. Surely they should pay for the costs they incur.

They do. Several economic analyses have been done, says Kip Viscusi, a Harvard University economist, "and they all show that smokers save society money." Smokers die before they can collect their expensive public pensions and nursing-home benefits. Moreover, cigarettes are the world's most heavily taxed consumer good. In America, which is on the low side by industrial-country standards, the tax has averaged $0.57 a pack (varying by state, and set to rise 10 cents on January 1st). This is more than is needed to pay what anybody thinks smokers cost society, even when you include a generous estimate for the social costs of secondhand smoke.

Forced to smoke?

Let there be no uncertainty about what is going on here: smokers are paying the rest of us for the privilege of puffing. The rest of us may justify this on grounds that smoking less would be better for smokers. But why not, then, a fatty foods tax? A motorcycle tax? A failure-to-floss tax? If anyone is being treated unfairly in the current scheme, it is the smokers. In any event, once smokers pay their own way, which they more than do already, monetary cost provides no excuse to treat smoking as the public's business.

Bereft of better grounds to assert that smoking is a social problem, anti-smoking activists then become creative. Some of them assert, for instance, that parents' smoking hurts asthmatic children. This may be true, but it is an argument for better parents, not fewer cigarettes. More commonly, some crusaders argue that smokers are pawns of tobacco companies, which ought to be punished.

On this line, one American anti-smoking activist says that cigarette makers are "responsible for the premature deaths of more Americans than any other group of individuals who have ever lived"; a British headline declares "Cigarette makers ready to buy off their victims"; a prominent anti-tobacco lawyer likens tobacco companies to "the bully who physically assaults a victim unable to defend himself." It is impressive how common this sort of sentiment has become, given that, on its face, the portrayal of smokers as bullied or deceived victims is preposterous.

Tobacco companies should not have been expected to declare cigarettes poisonous before that fact became firmly established; and when it did become established, it was promptly plastered, in plain language, on every tobacco advert and cigarette package, and shouted from every public-health rooftop. Big Tobacco's sub-

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sequent refusal to acknowledge that smoking is harmful or habit-forming may have been duplicitous, but it surely scores as the most spectacularly unsuccessful disinformation campaign in history, since anyone who does not know that smoking is bad for you lives on Mars.

Even before science established definitively that tobacco can kill you, people knew it was trouble. In America, cigarettes have been referred to as "coffin nails" for more than a century. Franklin Roosevelt once joked to a boy that he used the cigarette holder "because my doctor told me to stay as far away from cigarettes as possible." By the 1950s, surveys found that the overwhelming majority of people (90% in a 1954 Gallup poll), old and young, had heard that cigarettes can cause cancer.

Since then, public education about smoking has been a rousing success; since 1965, a year after the first definitive health warning, the rate of smoking in America has declined from more than 40% to about 25%, and the number of ex-smokers has trebled. Surveys show that by now the public, including smokers themselves, have a greatly exaggerated notion of smoking's peril; Mr. Viscusi, for instance, has found that the chances of getting cancer from cigarettes are typically overstated by a multiple of four or more. Plainly people have been duly informed. If they continue to smoke, that is not because anyone has fooled them.

It is true that tobacco advertising glamorises tobacco, which is dangerous. It is also true that motorcycle advertising glamorises motorcycles, which are dangerous. Both types of advert are arguably unwholesome, but the notion that a demonstrably well-informed public is helpless to resist them is silly, as much research has found.

"There is no clear relationship between restrictions on tobacco advertising and consumption of tobacco," says Jacob Sullum, the author of a forthcoming book on the anti-smoking movement. In countries that have banned tobacco advertising, cigarette consumption has not been affected in any consistent way. A 1993 study of 22 countries found no statistically significant effect from bans on tobacco advertising, and the insignificant effect was to increase consumption slightly. This is not so surprising, since tobacco adverts carry health warnings. Not even among youths is advertising demonstrably important, or a ban on adverts demonstrably helpful; a lorry-load of research finds, as with adults, no systematic relationship.

Addictive arguments

Here, however, the enemies of smoking lay down what they regard as a trump card. Smoking, unlike motorcycling, is addictive. And that is true. Nicotine quickly establishes a strong physical craving enforced by withdrawal pains (apparently by exploiting some of the same neural pathways as cocaine and opiates). But nicotine is not impossible to quit, merely difficult. There are today as many people who have quit smoking as there are people who smoke. As Mr. Sullum points out, America's National Survey on Drug Abuse finds that almost three-fourths of respondents had tried smoking, but only about 30% had smoked in the past month. This can hardly be a substance that demolishes the will.

Philosophically speaking, to take up smoking is merely to make a risky decision which is hard to reverse. People make risky, hard-to-reverse decisions all the time: marrying a violent man, donating a kidney, joining a cult, gambling their savings. If adulthood means anything, it means being able to choose a risky path even if turning back is difficult, provided that one is fully informed; and people are at least as well aware that smoking is hard to quit as that it is bad for you. Addictiveness, then, is biologically interesting, but it does not make a "social" problem of smoking. It does not even make a special problem of smoking.

One last argument is left, ever the final redoubt of illiberalism: protection of the young. Surely cigarette advertising and availability tempt those whose judgment is weakest. After all, the vast majority of smokers (90% or more) start as teenagers.

There is something in this argument, but less than enough to justify all that missionaries would do in its name. Adolescent bravado and myopia may indeed justify limiting smoking—like driving, voting and marrying—to adults; and such restrictions on the rights of children are fully consistent with liberalism. Most places forbid or regulate the sale of cigarettes to the young, and this is appropriate.

If youths are less wise than their elders, however, that is true in every department of life, and it gives no reason to hound adults. If the glamorisation of unhealthful habits is to be forbidden, then why stop with smoking adverts when ice cream, motorbikes and suntans pose so much risk? Sanitising advertising for the sake of children is no more defensible than sanitising films or censoring the Internet for their sake; harassing smokers in the name of children's welfare is no more defensible than harassing homosexuals or socialists.

Even such justifiable measures as education and bans on sales to the young should not be pushed too far. To tell a teenager that some practice is too dangerous for children is to beg him to embrace it. In the American state of Massachusetts, teenage smoking rose 10% after an aggressive anti-smoking campaign began; since 1992 teenage smoking has risen in America even as the overall rate has fallen, a fact that anti-smoking hysteria may partly explain. It is best, on the whole, to make sure the young understand the dangers of smoking—as they assuredly do, for they exaggerate the perils of tobacco even more than adults do—and then let parents encourage sensible behaviour as best they can. That is done already, and has been for years.

Just ban everything

In 1996, the parliament of Iran approved a ban on smoking in any public place. In Iran, however, the ban was soon overturned as being, of all things, unconstitutional. Meanwhile, under a law passed in the state of California, on January 1st it will become illegal to smoke in any bar, even if (as in "cigar bars") customers, proprietors and employees willingly seek solace in tobacco fumes. Surely something is wrong with this picture.

Because they are nursing their dudgeon and savouring their victories rather than thinking with care, anti-smokers believe themselves to be upholding liberal social principles when in fact they are traducing them. That is both ironic and unfortunate. Establishing Locke's principle—the demarcation of a privileged private sphere, where even well-intentioned snoops may not go—was the work of centuries. It should not be relinquished in a puff of smoke.

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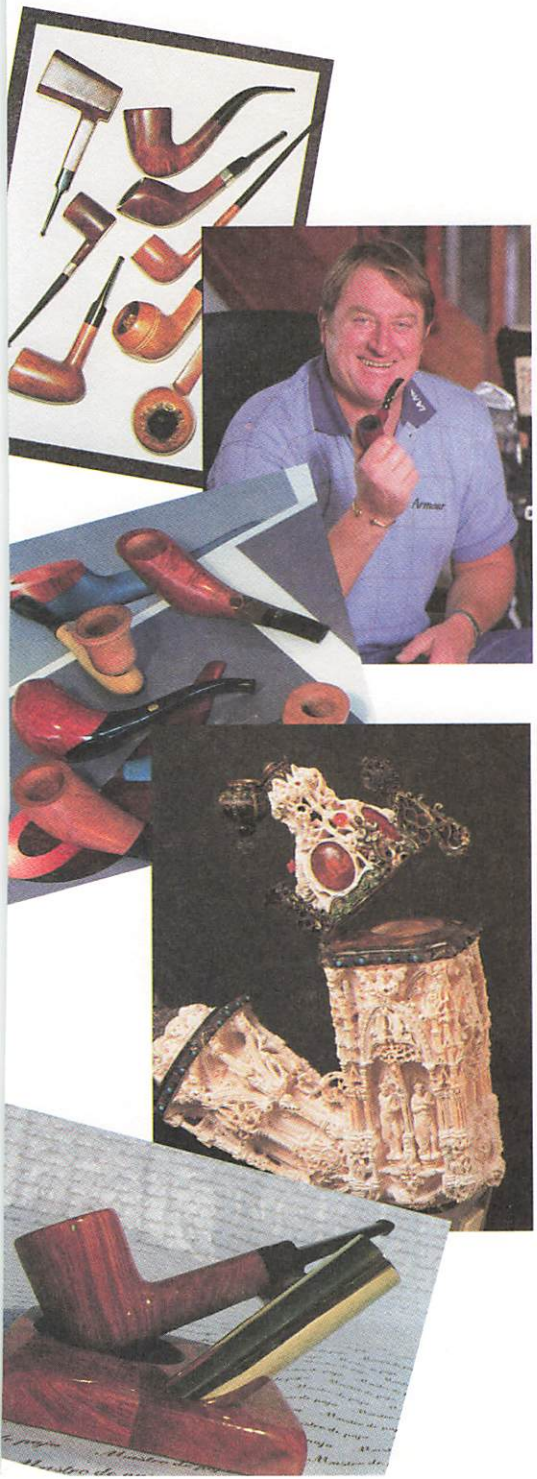

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an introduction to TOBACCO BLENDS

In past issues, *P&T* has carried numerous articles about types of tobaccos, where they are grown, the people for whom these crops are important and how the plants are raised and cured.

We continue our adventure into the world of pipe tobaccos by turning our attention to the manufacturers around the world who perfect and produce the blends of tobaccos that fill our pipes and bring us pleasure.

One of the most important points is brought out in the following article: Creating tobacco blends is both science and art. Many different machines have been created to manipulate tobaccos from around the world. Also, chemists have perfected numerous sauces or flavorings that provide interesting flavors to complement the natural flavors of the tobaccos used.

However, in spite of the hundreds of years of experience in producing pipe tobaccos, the final product is still to a great extent the expression of the art of the blender.

The basic types of tobacco—Burley, Flue-cured (Virginia), Oriental, Latakia and Perique—can be combined in a wide variety of ways. Other heat- and air-cured tobaccos can be added. But the complexity is just beginning. From year to year, tobacco crops from the same field vary in chemical content, flavor and physical makeup. For these reasons, tobacco from one year tastes and burns differently from crops of other years. The way the tobacco is cut also dramatically affects the end results. Add to this the many flavors that can be added and the number of blend permutations is beyond calculation.

It is the challenge of the manufacturing companies and their blenders to, first, create blends of tobacco that are pleasing to their customers. Second, they must balance these myriad factors in an effort to maintain that same flavor, body and character year in and year out.

Just as expert vintners blend wines from different varieties and different years, so do expert blenders perform these same miracles with pipe tobaccos. The result is a rich variety of blends available from manufacturers around the world.

Each brings something special to your pipe. But that doesn't mean that all will meet your personal preferences. Different smokers have different tastes. But the search for that perfect blend or blends is an important part of each smoker's pipe adventures.

Just as the ingredients vary, so do the manufacturers we will be visiting in future issues on a regular basis. Some, such as J.F. Germain & Son, visited in this issue, are small. Others are huge, like Orlik Tobacco Company. But the exciting factor is that they all are different—different in attitude, approach, experience, terminology. And those differences add to opportunities for delightful smoking experiences.

To provide a personal touch, we will be bringing you the comments of Kevin Cook regarding his personal experiences and attitudes regarding many of the related blends. You may or may not agree, but he will bring his own personal perspective.

We invite you to join us in future issues as we explore the tobacco manufacturers of the world. Your comments and questions will be greatly appreciated. ***—Dayton H. Matlick***

J.F. Germain & Son

Making superior English-style tobacco has been a primary activity of this company for 168 years

by Dayton H. Matlick

J.F. Germain & Son, manufacturer of the Esoterica brands of pipe tobacco, has been in business a long time...a very long time!

Earliest available records of the company go back to 1820. Located on the Isle of Jersey, southernmost of the Channel Islands located between England and France, the company specialized in supplies for the many ships that traded in the channel and for the fleets of ships based there that fished the northern Atlantic.

The company also had part ownership of a sailing ship. (Combination steam and sail powered ships weren't perfected until the 1830s.) Whether through this ship or as part of cargos from fishing boats that had sold their catch in the United States, leaf tobacco came to the company. They soon began making pipe tobacco for the shipping trade.

(To give an idea of how long ago 1820 was: The first covered bridge hadn't been built in Vermont; Maine hadn't been admitted to the Union; the first American locomotive hadn't been built; and we were still at war with the American Indians.)

The company was founded by Thomas Aubin, an old and important name around the island. Later, he transferred the company to his nephew, Philip Germain, who had been working with him since he got out of school.

Based in the harbor of St. Helier, the capital of Jersey, the company is located at 25 Commercial Buildings, only a few yards away from the place where Thomas Aubin began his career. And, after more than 175 years, it is still famous for making English-style tobaccos the small batch, old-fashioned, labor-intensive way—the way learned over all of those years.

Although located only 14 miles from the French coast, since 1066 A.D. Jersey has been loyal to England. (Sir Walter Raleigh was one of the early governors.) Fortifications dot the island, built during the years of wars between France and England. Some are more recent, built by a German occupying force during WW II.

An oblong block of granite measuring only nine miles long by four miles wide, Jersey has built a reputation over the years as the developer of the productive Jersey dairy cow, a variety of thin-skinned white potatoes in great demand and knitted Jersey clothing. But today, Jersey is most famous as one of the world's money and investment havens because of its favorable tax environment.

Earliest records of human habitation on the island go back 250,000 years. During its history, the island has long been swept by waves of immigration, when people, like the Protestant French Huguenots, fled oppression on the mainland. But today immigration requirements are some of the most stringent in the world. For example, don't think about applying for citizenship unless you have at least a million dollars in the bank!

As the island has changed over the years, so has J.F. Germain & Son Co. In addition to making outstanding pipe tobacco, the company also is involved in several other enterprises, the largest of which is distributing a wide variety of smoking-related items throughout the Channel Islands. This includes everything from state-of-the-art lighters, to pipes from many countries and Cuban cigars.

Four directors run the company, all Germains. The pipe tobacco operation is the responsibility of Robert J. Germain, a member of the fifth generation involved in the family business. Robert's office is located on the second floor of the sturdy, rock-walled building, looking down on a harbor full of ships. The walls are lined with portraits of ancestors, while tables are stacked with records and tobacco tins.

"Our family arrived on the island around 1730," says Robert. "The ship stores business was flourishing by 1820, and by 1830 pipe tobacco manufacturing was a primary activity. The machinery used in the early days was powered by a donkey walking

around in a circle. There were few buildings at first and most of the ships' stores were stacked in the open. By 1850 the donkey had been replaced by a steam boiler fired with coal hauled across the channel from England. The company is actually named after the son of Philip Germain, who inherited the company from Aubin."

The weather in Jersey aids in making pipe tobacco. The relative humidity is perfect for the work, hardly ever varying from 60 to 70 percent. In addition, summer temperature in the granite buildings remains steady at about 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

Some of the blends—"recipes, if you like"—are quite old, although most have changed slightly over the years. Several blends have maintained their "recipes" for almost 60 years. For example, Plum Cake, which is sold mainly in the U.K., hasn't changed its recipe for more than 40 years, and the current recipe was derived from an even older one. Most sales of Germain blends are made to the Channel Islands, England, the U.S. and Italy.

"Esoterica Tobacciana was started by Stephen Richman, of California. In the early 1990s he was looking for someone to produce his blends. We heard about his interest and made contact with him through the British Embassy. We must have been what he was looking for, because we started doing business together immediately. He later sold the Esoterica brands to Mike Butera, of Houston, Texas. We make the blends for Mike and he distributes them throughout the U.S.," says Robert.

"He is also distributing King Charles, a solid kind of tobacco that is one of our own brands. It's straight tobacco with no flavorings added. It is made of Virginia, Oriental and Latakia tobaccos, cut at about 14 cuts an inch. We hope Mike will add more of our brands in the future."

Tobacco supply, a constant nagging pressure, is the first critical element in making pipe blends. "We buy from agents—companies and individuals all over the world," says Robert. "We are always looking for the best quality for the best price. Once an agent knows what we are looking for, he is valuable to us."

Tobaccos are bought all over the world. Flue-cured (Virginia) tobacco from the U.S., Brazil, Italy and Zimbabwe. Burley from the U.S. and Malawi. Oriental from Greece and Turkey. Latakia from Cyprus. Perique from the U.S. (Just recently, Robert made a contact to buy Perique directly from Louisiana.) Plus a variety of air- and heat-cured tobaccos from other countries around the world, from India and Bulgaria to the Far East.

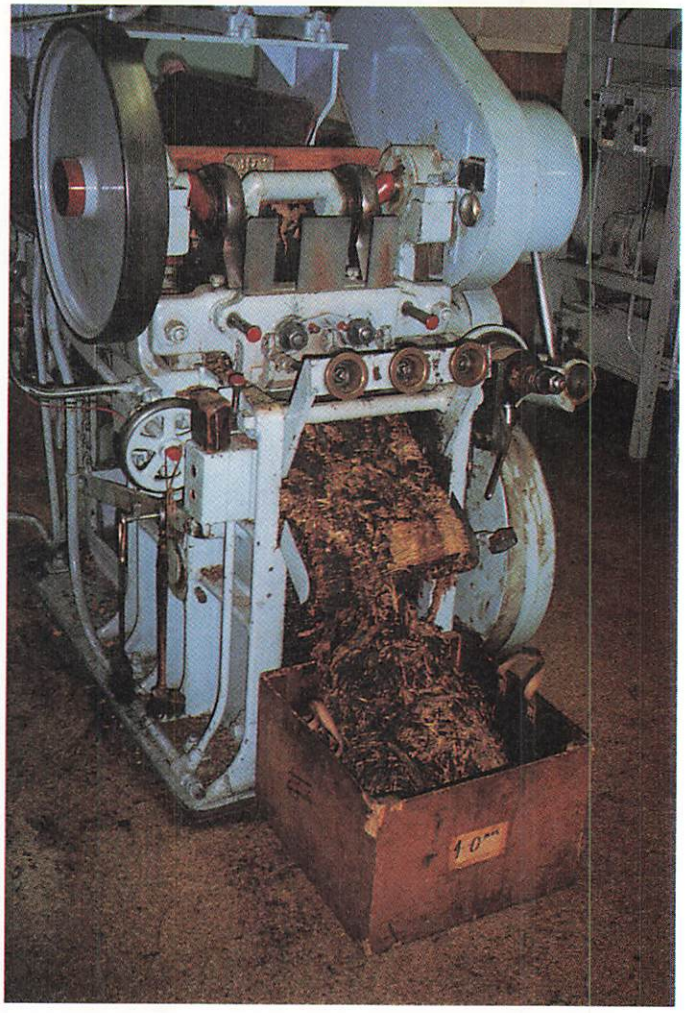
Most tobacco Germain receives has been threshed by a leaf processor, which has removed the large center rib from each leaf and packed the tobacco in strips. Depending on country of origin, it comes in crates, boxes or hogsheads weighing many hundreds of pounds. Perique, a "spice" in the tobacco blends, comes in 500-pound lots. That's a lot of spice!

All the tobacco purchased is ultimately shipped to the large, international port of Rotterdam. Germain has tried other ports but primarily uses Rotterdam today. This is not because of the quality of the port, but because there is a ship based on the neighboring Channel Island of Guernsey that makes the trip to Rotterdam and back to the islands on a regular basis. And it docks only a few hundred yards away from the Germain headquarters.

Tobacco is shipped from the Rotterdam warehousing company as needed. When it arrives, the tobacco is dry, brittle and pressed tightly in its containers. The first task is to loosen it up, remove any for-

Robert Germain examines King Charles blend after it comes through a guillotine cutter.

King Charles blend of straight tobacco moves down a conveyor belt and under a compression roller where it is cut by a guillotine blade. It is caught in a box and moved to a cylinder where it is tumbled and dried. The finished product is then packaged for sale.



eign matter and spray it with water or steam to begin the process of getting the tobacco moist enough that it can be worked properly. The final product must be limp and flexible for proper blending and cutting. Sometimes, depending on the tobacco, casings or flavorings are added as part of this moistening process.

Depending on the tobacco type and source, it can take days to bring the tobacco to the proper condition. According to Robert, the longest time is required by some African air-cured leaf. If it is sprayed on Wednesday afternoon, it may be Friday afternoon before that leaf can be worked.

"At every step we are looking for foreign matter," says Robert. "One of our biggest finds was a huge metal door hinge, with part of the door frame still attached. Another was a large batch of chicken feathers. We always wondered who got the rest of the bird."

Moistening is followed by a blending process called preliminary mixing. Different types of tobacco, or the same tobaccos from different years, are mixed together in metal bins on wheels. They are about six feet square, "about the size of a small bathroom, but only half as tall." The tobacco in these bins stands until it—and the casings, if added—blends together. This can take from a couple of hours to more than 24 hours, depending on the desired result.

The next steps depend on whether the tobacco is going to be a "straight cut" or pressed into a flake. After mixing and the addition of flavorings or casing, straight-cut tobacco is dried and cut to specifications. Then it is packaged in tins. King Charles is an example of a Germain blend processed this way.

Robert stresses that his mixtures, including aromatics, contain primarily extracts of natural fruit, licorice and cognac.

For aromatic blends, a final top-dressing of flavorings or sauces is applied immediately before packaging. Left too long in the open air, the volatile sauces lose flavor.

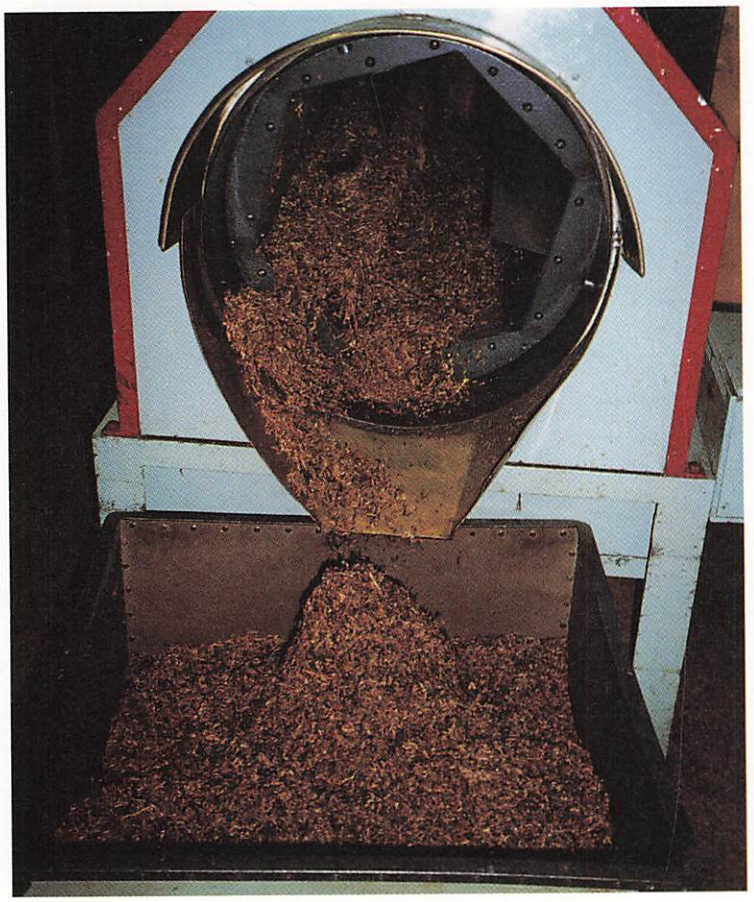
Some tobacco is made into a cake form before cutting. The tobacco blend is put into a hydraulic press and subjected to 2,000 pounds of pressure per square inch. The result is a solid, hard "board" of tobacco measuring 16.5 inches on a side and between 3/4 and 3 inches thick. To keep the cakes from loosening before they are used, they are stored in manual presses, with as many as 20 cakes in each press.

Like the selection of tobaccos, cutting is a tool the blender uses to create the desired end product. The rougher or coarser a given lot of tobacco is cut, the slower it will burn; correspondingly, the finer it is cut, the faster it will burn. Since different tobaccos have different burning rates, the cut used enables the blender to balance tobaccos within the blend.

"We cut nothing less than nine or 10 cuts an inch," says Robert. "At the other extreme, the guillotine cutter we use can cut as fine as 60 cuts an inch. However, that is too fine for pipe tobacco. Most pipe tobacco runs about 16 cuts to the inch. However, we do have one flake tobacco (Esoterica Stonehaven) that we make with 22 cuts an inch."

The slices that result are called flakes. Tobacco can also be cut across the earlier cut at a 90-degree angle to produce squares or cubes of tobacco. Or it can be forced through a metal grating, producing small, irregularly shaped pieces, a practice that Germain & Son does not follow. Each change of physical dimensions has an effect on the finished product.

The flakes can be left in a cake form or "rubbed out" to loosen the tobacco particles. The latter approach is essential if



the cake tobacco is to be used as part of a blend. This rubbed-out tobacco is sometimes called sliced, broken cake. The rubbing out is achieved by tumbling the tobacco in a turning cylinder until the desired degree of separation is reached.

Cavendish and Black Cavendish tobaccos are part of many blends. Germain & Son makes its own Cavendish in two different styles. The more normal style Cavendish is a mixture of base-type tobaccos—Burley and Virginia—with a number of sauces added. It is then allowed to ferment under pressure with heat added. The elapsed time depends on the tobaccos used and goals of the maker, and can vary from one to as many as 20 days. The result is a light-bodied, soft tobacco that brings a special taste experience, whether it is a main element of the blend, or more in the background.

In addition to this style of Cavendish, Germain also produces an unusual version of Cavendish, begun as a result of experiments done by Robert's grandfather in the 1920s. It contains only natural tobaccos—no sauces or flavorings are added. There is a physical difference in the tobacco produced by the two different methods. The natural version is a Black Cavendish that burns slowly, but isn't too black.

"We have developed our recipes for Cavendish more than 100 years," says Robert. "All makers of pipe tobaccos have their secrets. The secret of Cavendish is in knowing how much of each element to use—tobacco varieties, sauces, pressure and heat—and, most important, when and how to use it.

"Making pipe tobacco involves both science and art. We have found out over the years how to use the machines and tools effectively. But, in the end, it is the knowledge, the instinct of the person making the tobacco, that makes the difference. He has to 'feel' which tobaccos should be used, which sauces, if any, the exact length of time each batch should sit, which cut will be perfect. That is where the art has its impact."

Esoterica Tobacciana, the primary Germain & Son tobaccos sold in the United States, is made up of 18 blends and flakes:

Peacehaven: A blend of six Virginia tobaccos, gently pressed into a light flake and packed immediately after cutting to keep the slices whole.

Brighton: Similar to Peacehaven, but slightly matured by lightly pressing and then using a coarser cut.

Margate: An old-style English mixture in which Latakia and Black Cavendish predominate.

Pembroke: Latakia and Black Cavendish with a dash of cognac.

Penzance: A broad double-cut flake made with Latakia and Virginia tobacco with a small portion of Black Cavendish.

Tilbury: A selection of tobaccos including golden and dark Virginias specially matured and processed to give a unique natural aroma.

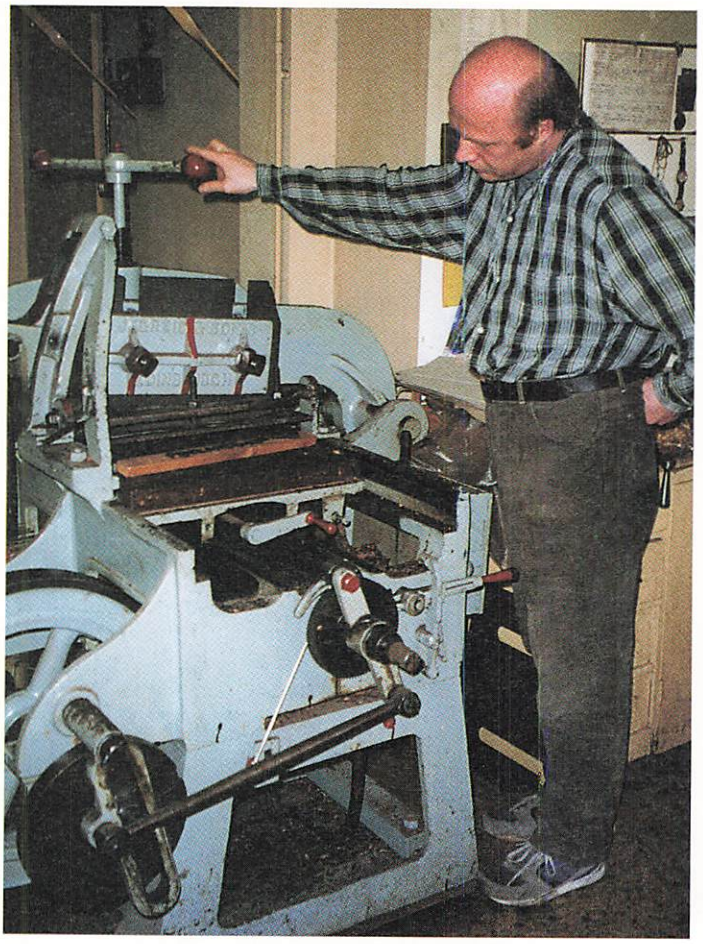
Dunbar: Seven types of Virginia leaf with Louisiana Perique, broad cut and ready rubbed.

Dorchester: Some spiced and some aged Virginias, some pressed, all cut different widths.

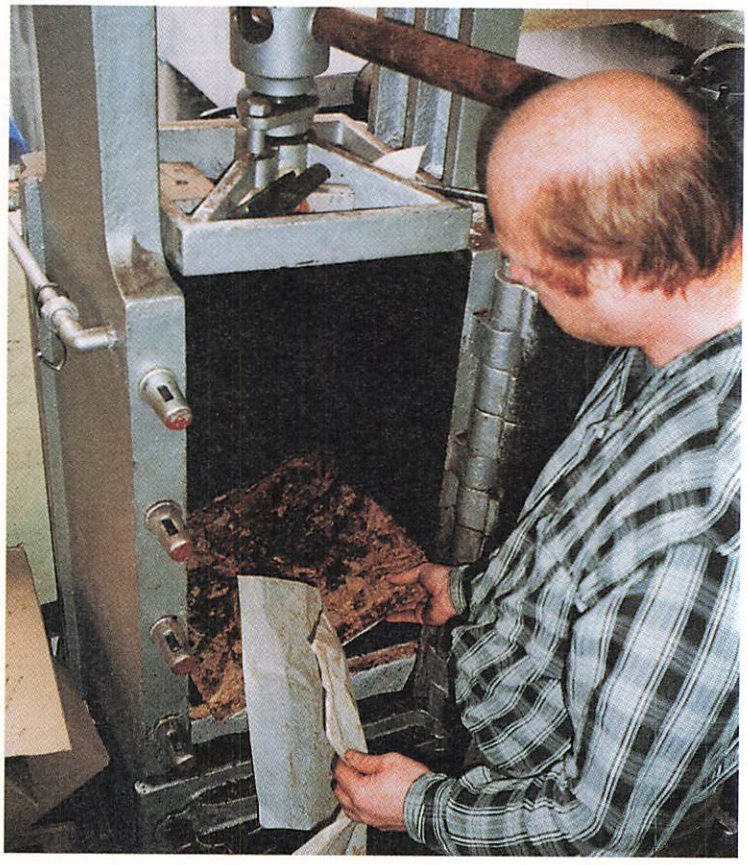
And So To Bed: A selection of Virginia and Maryland tobaccos with top grade Latakia and Oriental leaf slightly aged with some added flavor.

Stonehaven: Burley and air-cured leaf blended with dark Virginias, hard pressed to produce brown flakes with a black crust.

Cardiff: Four Virginia tobaccos



Flake tobacco is put under pressure in hydraulic presses until hard as a board; then it is stored in manual presses until ready to cut.



John Crocker, head of pipe tobacco production, has been with Germain for 20 years. Here he adjusts a guillotine cutter slicing Penzance tobacco.

pressed until reddish brown and fully rubbed up.

Kingsbridge: Produced by hot pressing dark and golden Virginia tobaccos until jet black.

Blackpool: Processed like Kingsbridge, but with added licorice flavor.

Ramsgate: Same as Blackpool, but with the addition of a fruit extract in a wine spirit.

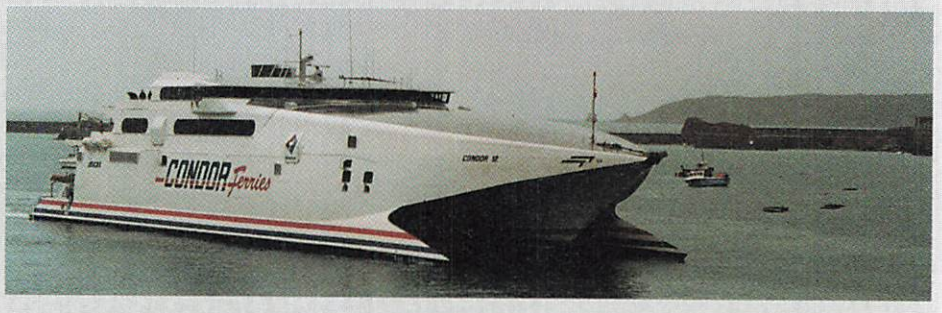
Woodbridge: A combination of gold and red Virginias with an added fruit extract in a wine spirit, mixed with Black Cavendish.

Scarborough: Golden and dark Virginias lightly pressed, cut and rubbed up.

St. Ives: A mixture of Black Cavendish and Latakia blended with dark and gold Virginias, enhanced with a sweet fruity flavor.

Hastings: Half Black Cavendish and half flue-cured Virginias, flavored with an aromatic sauce.

All of the mixtures are available in bulk. Seven are also available in vacuum-packed two ounce metal tins: And So To Bed, Penzance, Pembroke, Margate, Dunbar, Dorchester and Tilbury. ***P&T***



Getting to the Isle of Jersey is half the fun. The most enjoyable way is the fast Condor Ferry that makes the trip from the English mainland. Don't underestimate its size; it carries approximately 100 cars and hundreds of passengers. Don't be surprised, either, when the beautiful harbor goes dry twice a day. Jersey varies as much as 40 feet between high and low tides.

TOBACCO TALK

One smoker's experiences with Esoterica Tobacciana blends from J.F. Germain & Son

by Kevin Cook

Esoterica Tobacciana
A soft, but full-bodied mixture for the evening
And so to bed
"Put on your smoking jacket, pour a glass of vintage port, let your golden Retriever settle at your feet & enjoy this superlative mixture while you chronicle the day's events in your diary."
Pipe tobacco entirely made, blended and aged in the British Isles

A ribbon-cut blend of mostly dark tobaccos—about half blackish and half dark reddish brown, with a sprinkling of blonder strands. In the pouch this smells like a heavy Latakia-based English, although perhaps a little sweeter and less smoky than one might expect. Flavorwise, this reminds me a bit of *Balkan Sobranie 759* with its heavy smoothness, but a notch darker. There is just a hint of sweet flavor and aroma from the Virginias that serves as the backdrop for the full and dark taste that is dominant.

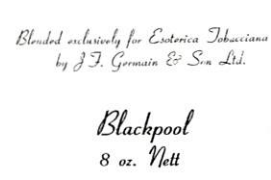
I find this to be as appealing as *Margate* and *Pembroke* in terms of its richness and its thick, creamy smoke, but a little spicier, darker-tasting and less sweet than those two. Another very pleasant smoke for aficionados of smooth, full-strength English blends that are mild on the tongue. It burns cleanly and slowly to a fine salt-and-pepper ash.

Esoterica Tobacciana
Dorchester
A Rich, Full, Matured Virginia With Louisiana Perique
Pipe tobacco entirely made, blended and aged in the British Isles

This medium-cut Virginia-Perique blend is overall a medium, earthy-brown color that is punctuated by lighter beige and darker, blackish threads. It has a sweet, musty aroma in the pouch, which is very similar to what you taste upon lighting up. The balance of seasoning is strikingly good, with neither the sweetness of the Virginias nor the pepperiness of the Perique dominating. Still, the Perique is there in ample quantity to come through clearly with its subtle bite. A bowl of this becomes more peppery as it is smoked and the sweetness subsides quite a bit. It provides a medium-bodied smoke that is clean-tasting and quite refreshing.

Although I've smoked this mixture only in a meerschaum, it seems to be very smooth and creamy for a Virginia-Perique mix, except near the bottom of the pipe, where it gets sharper. It seems to have a little less kick than Dunhill's *Elizabethan*, but it's still a very satisfying smoke, especially with its rich, full-flavored Virginia base. This is one of the best Virginia-Perique blends I've had to date, since I find many of them to be too strong on the tongue.

I find this makes a good morning smoke. The room aroma is unmistakably that of a Virginia-Perique mixture: slightly sweet, slightly pungent.


Blended exclusively for Esoterica Tobacciana by J.F. Germain & Son Ltd.
Blackpool
8 oz. Nett
Pipe Tobacco entirely made, blended and aged in the British Isles.

This is a medium-cut tobacco that is about as black as they come. The tobacco has a sporadically grayish appearance due to fine sugar crystals that have formed on the surface. Closer examination shows that it isn't completely black and that there is a fair amount of dark brown in the mixture. Composed of well-matured Virginia tobaccos, this is the way I think a Virginia blend should be: smooth and non-biting. A licorice topping is added, which seems to

be a great complement to the tobacco's naturally dark, full taste.

I wouldn't want to suggest that this is a really sweet blend, but it is certainly more sweet than it is bitter. It does have a certain pungency to it, though, that reminds me a bit of a raisin flavor with the sweetness removed. I still find it interesting that I like this flavor added to tobacco, since I detest (will not eat) licorice-flavored candy. It lacks the subtle fresh-fruity complexity of flavor that many lighter Virginia blends possess; instead, it is a thoroughly full-flavored and fairly uniform-tasting blend.

It burns very dry; in fact, the tobacco doesn't even tend to stick together much in the pipe. It burns slow and cool (the ideal blend for a pipe that tends to smoke hot), but doesn't necessitate constant relighting as do some slow-burning blends. It produces quite thick smoke with little puffing effort required, which is a positive quality for me. Although not strong on the tongue, it is a very relaxing, full-strength blend that some might prefer to smoke in a smaller pipe. Still, it is not quite as full as *Stonehaven*, which is further spiked with burley. Burns to a fine whitish powder and leaves a heavy, natural tobacco aroma in the room.

Here's a deliciously dark Latakia-based blend, heavier yet than *Penzance*, that burns slowly and provides an exceedingly smooth and dry smoke. It falls into that category of mixtures that tend toward a slight sweetness, not toward bitterness, probably owing to the presence of certain Virginia tobaccos. Its rich, bite-free, nutty Latakia flavor has a chocolatelike character that is an outstanding complement to a cup of fragrant black coffee. Its aroma is analogous to its flavor—heavy, rich, smoky—and I wish it would linger longer. Dark-brown to blackish medium-cut tobacco with medium reddish-brown flecks. Absolutely superb.

This is *Margate* with cognac. It's a somewhat fine, medium-cut blend, whose long strands tend to cling together when fresh out of the tin. It has a fairly high moisture content for an English blend and definitely is easier to pack and smoke after being dried a bit. Even though I tend to smoke my tobacco fairly dry, I find this one has superior flavor when it is still a bit moist.

Overall, it's quite dark in color. Blackish and dark, reddish-brown tobacco dominates, but it also contains lesser quantities of lighter, beige strands. The pouch aroma is multifaceted, with a rich, dark Virginia aroma mixed with that of a good helping of Latakia and a cognac topping. The cognac topping adds a certain degree of sweetness and a pronounced fermented, almost flowery, aroma to the mixture.

This aroma, which is fairly typical of tinned tobaccos, is intense enough that it is passed on to the smoke's flavor. In fact, upon lighting up the flavor is surprisingly similar to its pouch aroma, a little bit sweet, and very rich due to the Latakia and matured Virginias.

With this much Latakia, it is a smoky-tasting blend, but balanced with the Virginias it has a bit of that chocolate flavor that characterizes some English blends. It's unequivocally a rich-bodied, full English blend, smoother than many,

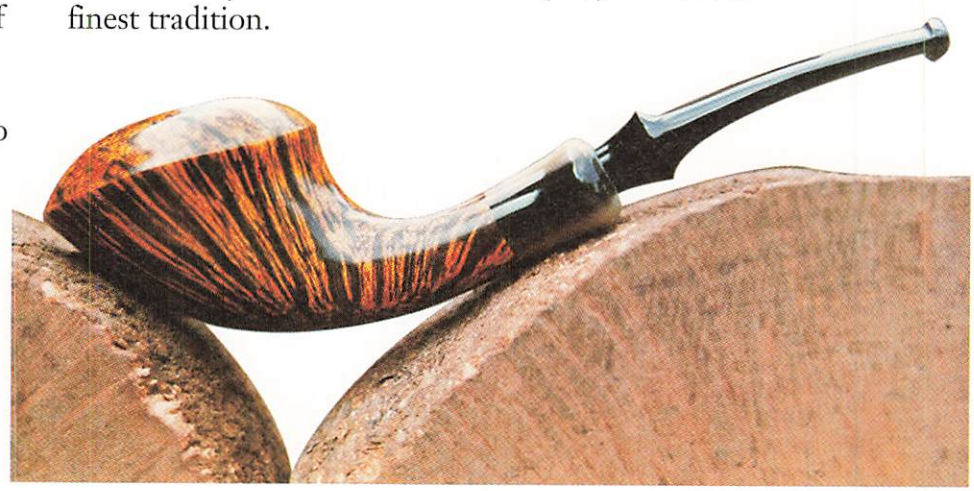
Danish Craftsmanship

Jess Chonowitsch was trained by two Danish master pipemakers. First, there was Poul Rasmussen, who produced classical pipes. Then came Sixten Ivarsson, the famous creator of Danish freehand pipes.

From this unequaled instruction, Jess developed into a master in his own right. Producing fewer than 250 pipes a year—every aspect produced by hand—Jess pipes are famous on every continent in the world.

Whether working in classical or freehand, Jess puts some of himself into every pipe. The result is unmistakably Jess...and unmistakably Danish in the finest tradition.

Jess pipes are available in the U.S. through Uptown Smoke Shops, 3900 Hillsboro Road, Nashville, TN 37215; telephone (615) 292-9576.



very mild on the tongue, and produces a fairly large volume of smoke. The combination of a hint of a sweet perfume and Latakia makes it a smoke that you might want to keep close to your nose while the bowl is burning.

It isn't as strong as blends that contain discernable quantities of Perique. Perhaps for this reason, it provides a mildness that makes it one of the best heavy English blends I've tried for all-day smoking. It burns well, and slowly too, despite its slightly fine cut. However, when it's still very fresh and moist, it isn't always so easy to keep lit.

It produces a dark and distinctive, yet slightly sweet room aroma that I, as a Latakia lover, find very comforting, but some bystanders have commented that it is quite strong. It smokes dry and clean, despite my occasional mention of moisture, reducing to a fine pepper-and-salt ash.

Blended exclusively for Esoterica Tobacciana
by J.F. Germain and Son.
Penzance
Finest English Mottled Flake
Pipe Tobacco entirely made, blended and aged in the British Isles.
2 ounces (56.7gm.)

Dark brown in soft, self-crumbling flakes, this is very similar to *Bengal Slices* with its slow burning (but it burns well) and its smooth, smoky flavor. Here, though, the flavor is more lively and not so one-dimensional. A subtle sweetness, probably due to richer, sweeter Virginias being used in the recipe, joins the rich Latakia flavor. The room aroma is also slightly more pronounced. Since this burns cool, I like to smoke it in a big pipe that smokes well, but a bit hot. An excellent and most relaxing, full English blend that I seem to smoke mostly late at night.

Blended exclusively for Esoterica Tobacciana
by J.F. Germain & Son Ltd.
Ramsgate
8 oz. Nett
Pipe Tobacco entirely made, blended and
aged in the British Isles.

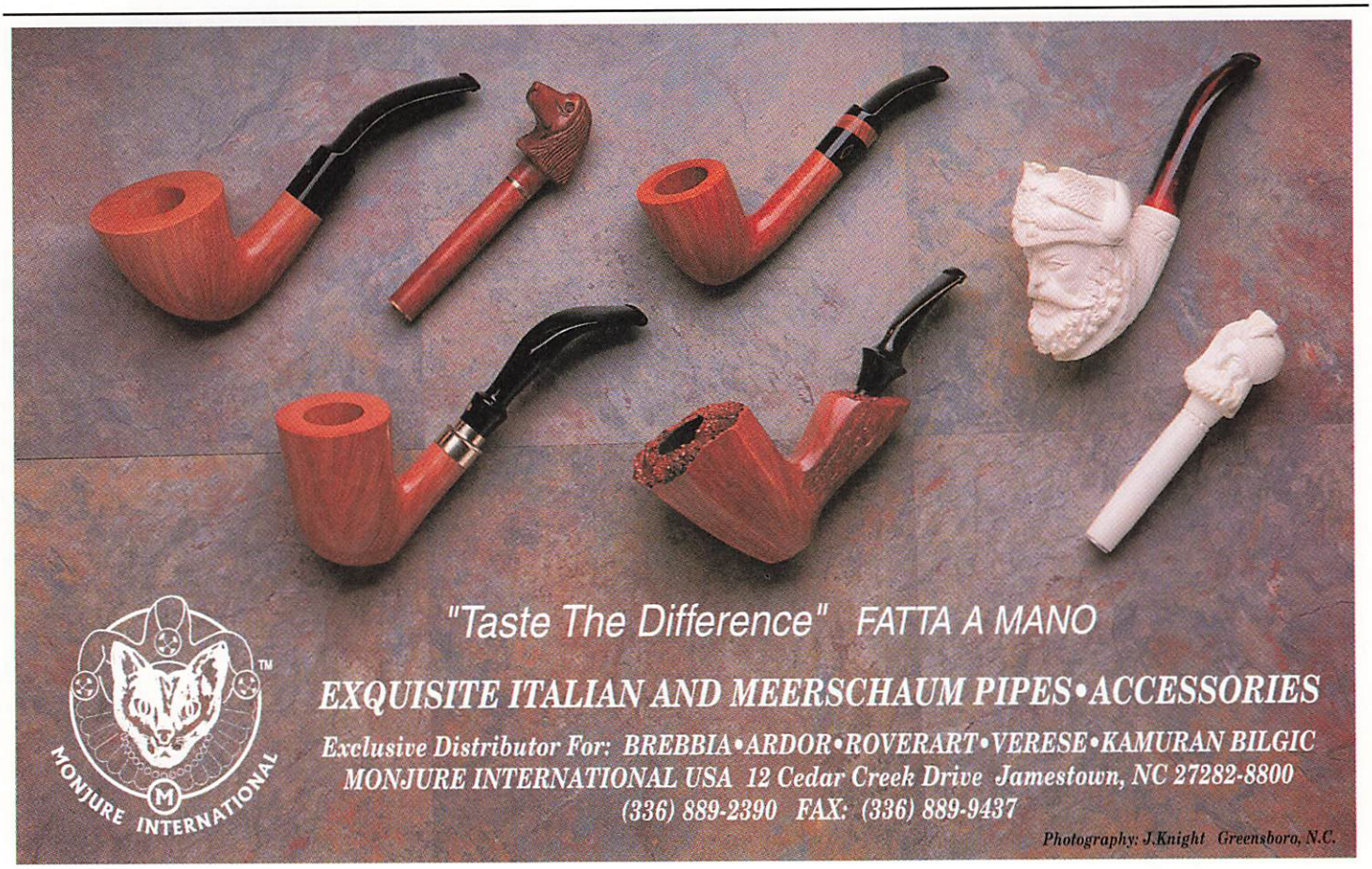
This one reminds me a lot of *Blackpool*. Quite black in appearance, but with a bit of a grayish patina caused presumably by natural sugars exuding from the tobacco. Like *Blackpool*, this is also a Virginia-based preparation with a licorice topping that is not in any way aromatic.

The manufacturer's description is very similar to *Blackpool*, except that mention is made of an "aroma enhancement" with regards to *Ramsgate*. Indeed, it smells slightly more flowery, and its actual flavor seems a little lighter and smoother, but not much.

In any case it is dry in the pouch, doesn't cling together, and smokes dry in the pipe, producing a small quantity of very fine, light gray ash along the way. It burns cool and slowly, and provides a smooth, no-bite, strong smoke. The flavor is full, dark, and just a touch bitter in a pleasant way. There is the suggestion of sweetness without there actually being a sweet taste.

Although the smoke is smooth and soft on the palate, it has a stimulating, subtly piercing effect when it drifts into the nostrils. The flavor doesn't get harsher as one gets farther down a bowl of this, but it does get richer. An excellent blend, but I think I personally prefer the slightly more vibrant taste of Blackpool.

Kevin Cook has been recording his personal reactions to pipe tobaccos for the past three years, motivated by his love for the hobby and, he says, "as a way for this absent-minded pipe smoker to record his observations on what he did and did not like." Cook says there is no accounting for taste, "and mine seems to change over time."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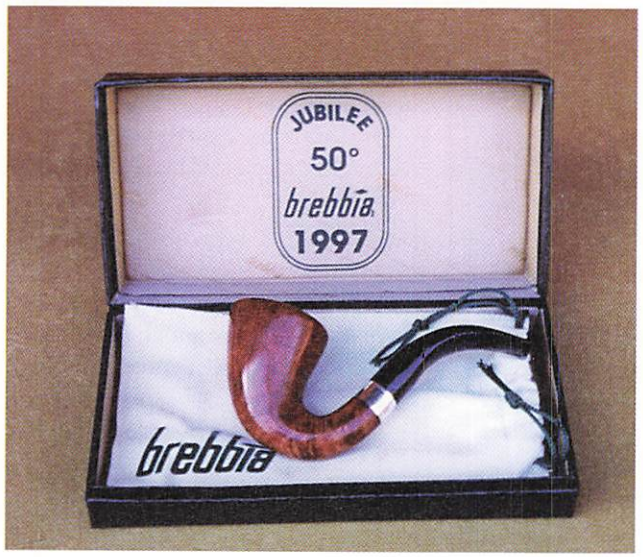

Brebbia Pipa Jubilee Calabash Pura Noce—1997

Handmade in Italy by Pipe Brebbia, this calabash-style briar pipe has a walnut finish and features a sterling silver band and lucite mouthpiece. The Jubilee Series began in 1992 and includes the following styles: Sax, Rhod, Sharp, Harmony, Diletta and Calabash. All styles are housed in a handsome presentation box.

Brebbia Pipes are distributed by Monjure International USA. For the Brebbia retailer nearest you, contact Monjure International, 12 Cedar Creek Drive, Jamestown, NC 27282; telephone 336.889.2390; or fax 336.889.9437.

Sheffield Pipe Accessories

The Sheffield Exchange has assembled an attractive collection of pipe smokers' accessories for the most discriminating smoking enthusiast.

These handcrafted pewter items reflect hundreds of years of traditional craftsmanship from the metal artisans of Sheffield, England. Suggested retail pricing ranges from $24.95 for the traditional pipe rest, up to $90 for the pewter tobacco humidor. For more information, contact The Sheffield Exchange Ltd., 6251 Violet Circle, Mechanicsville, VA 23111; telephone 804.746.7900; or fax 804.559.3864.

Glen Ord

Though its reputation as a prized whiskey in Scotland has been established for nearly 160 years, Glen Ord Malt Scotch Whisky has been available in the United States only since 1996. Hailed by leading Scotch whisky expert and author Michael Jackson as "perilously drinkable," Glen Ord has been judged the best single malt scotch in the world for three years running, earning gold medals in prestigious international spirits competitions.

Aged a full 12 years in oak casks and slowly developing its unique flavor and color, Glen Ord is ideal for sipping with your favorite pipe. Available at most spirits retailers for an average price of $25-$30 for 750 ml. Additional information may be obtained by calling 888.6GLENORD, or visiting *www.glenord.com*.

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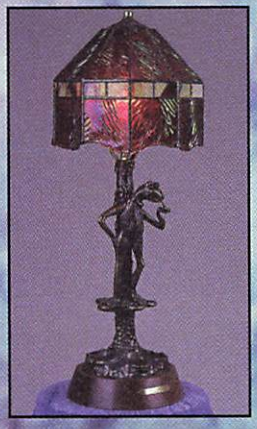

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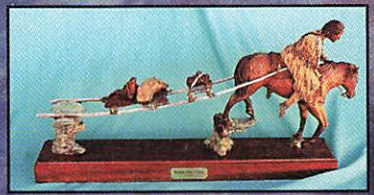

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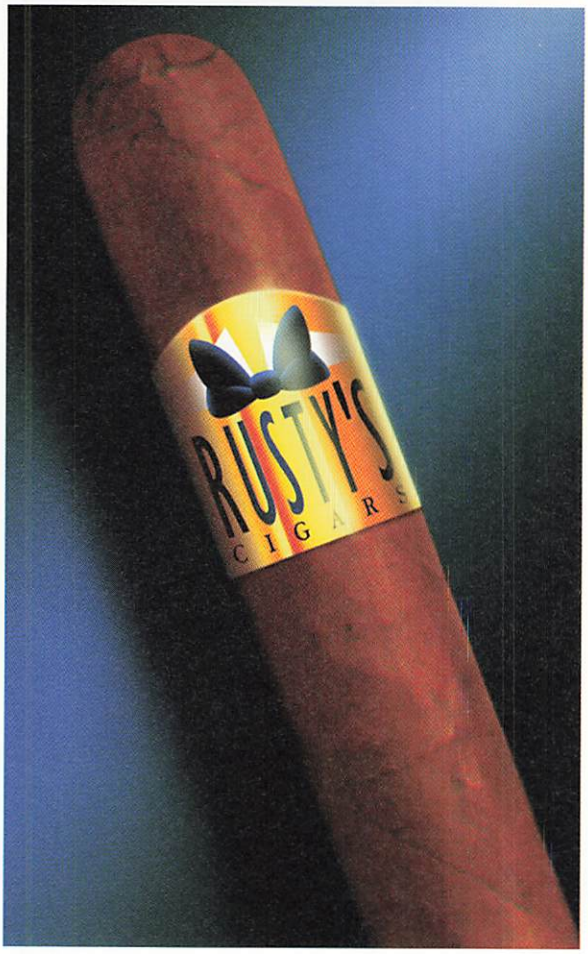


Rusty's Cigars

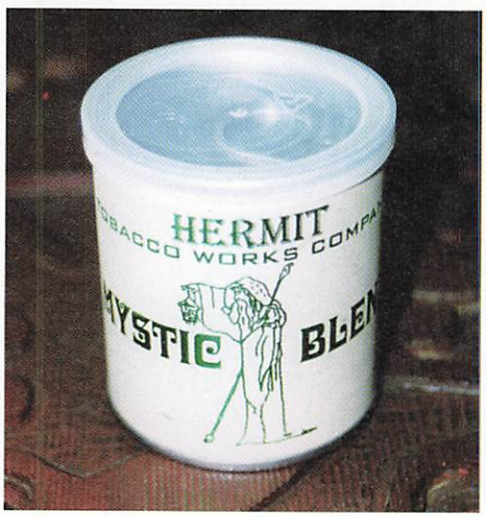
Created by an experienced product designer who loves to smoke cigars, but loves even more the taste and smell of pipe tobacco, Rusty's Cigars provide the best of both worlds, constructed of fine pipe tobacco rolled into an attractive cigar.

Currently available in the Rusty's Number III, a nougat celebration blend of premium pipe tobaccos. The Rusty's Number V, which will be a liquor-flavored robusto, is expected soon.

A four-pack of Rusty's cigars retails for $17.95, a 10-pack is $41.95, and a box of 25 is $99.95. For further information, call 800.587.7766 or 818.567.5968; or write to Rusty's Cigars at 18648 Tulsa Street, Northbridge, CA 91326.

Mystic Blend

Hermit Tobacco Works Company of Pioneer, Ohio, uses the time-proven techniques of hand-blending in small quantities, aging in antique containers and hand-tinning to ensure the highest quality in its blends. Mystic Blend is the culmination of three years of intense development. Mystic is a complex all-natural English blend of nine of the world's finest tobaccos, blended for the true pipe-smoking connoisseur.



Hermit Tobacco Works Company is the micro-blender of the acclaimed Captain Earle's pipe tobacco blends, which include Private Stock (a blend of eight all-natural tobaccos, rich in Latakia and red Virginia); Honor Blend (red Virginia, mild Cavendish, Turkish and Perique); and Ten Russians (a stoved, Latakia-rich blend).

Contact Hermit Tobacco Works Company for retail and wholesale information: P.O. Box 669, Pioneer, OH 43554; call 517.567.2208; or see the Web site at *http://members.aol.com/pipestand/index.html.*

Teton Glacier Potato Vodka

Select Idaho potatoes are the key to producing Teton Glacier. While other vodka producers use grains such as wheat, rye or corn, potatoes allow for distillation at a higher proof than grain, and the harshness or "bite" generally associated with grain spirits is eliminated. A four-column, triple distillation process and a proprietary multi-stage filtration system using both charcoal and crystal produce a refined spirit entirely free of congeners and all other impurities. An 80 proof vodka, Glacier is available exclusively in a 750 ml decanter of clear glass. For further information, contact Greer Enterprises at 212.580.4888.

K.B. Pipes Pipe Racks

Designed with larger pipes in mind, K.B. Pipes pipe racks are custom-made in a variety of woods and sizes. Prices vary according to exotic wood desired, finish and size. This 26-pipe rack is made of teak, with stanchions of laminated walnut and birch. Smaller or larger racks are available, as well as wall-mounted racks and cabinets, and individual pipe holders and accessories. For further information, contact K.B. Pipes, 29161 Murre Lane, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-1303, or call 714.831.2627.

Ser Jacopo Picta

A new addition to the Ser Jacopo Picta series, No.15 came as a surprise to Giancarlo Guidi a year after he thought the series was complete. With an educational background in art, Giancarlo had carefully researched the paintings of Van Gogh, interpreting the pipes from 14 of the artworks. But while looking through an art book this year, he found another Van Gogh piece with pipe.

Each of the 15 pipes in the Picta series is available in five different finishes: Rustic, $285; Sandblast, $315; Ruby Smooth, $325; Walnut Smooth, $395; Natural Smooth, $495. Because of the popularity of the series, pipe smokers have rushed to purchase No.15 to complete their Picta collections, so it may be difficult to find.

The drawing is currently housed in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, but the Ser Jacopo pipe is available at your local tobacconist, or fax Marble Arch Ltd. (516.536.9781) for the name of the Ser Jacopo retailer nearest you.

Ars Vitri-Eser Glass Pipe Rest

Designed and handmade by master glass blower Wilhelm Esser, Ars Vitri-Eser pipe rests are made of high-quality glass for unobtrusive display of your fine pipes. Wilhelm Eser has more than three decades experience as both a glass blower and a pipe smoker, and brings his two passions together in a remarkable line of pipe furniture. Also available are pipe stand/ashtray combinations, double and triple pipe stands, and cigar rest/ashtray accessories. Available at fine tobacconists and distributed by F & K Cigar Co., 9420 Page Ave., Saint Louis, MO 63132; telephone 314.721.0711 or 800.848.1480; or fax 314.721.7196.

Tony Rodriguez Pipe Cabinets

This 28-pipe cabinet, designed and manufactured by Tony Rodriguez of Los Angeles, California, is made of fine red oak. The cabinet has 24 air holes cut into the sides, top and bottom to provide breathing air for the stored pipes. The handles are brass, and the doors are held closed with magnetic clasps. The darkened plexiglass is lighter and safer than glass, and protects pipestems from sunlight, to reduce oxidation. Interior lighting is available. These cabinets start at $1,200, and are available through Uptown's Smoke Shop, 888.292.9576.

Butz-Choquin

The Cybele, a new pipe from Butz-Choquin, is available in three finishes: red, orange and walnut. Packaged in a distinctive boxed suede bag, the suggested retail price for the Cybele is $120 for orange, and $95 for walnut or red. The Cybele is available at your local tobacconist, or contact Hollco-Rohr, 818.885.0850 or 800.24SMOKE, for the name of the retailer nearest you.

Illuminated Pipe/Cigar Stand

The Illuminated Pipe/Cigar Stand from Meyda Tiffany doubles as an attractive floor lamp. The fixture is handcrafted of stained glass on a solid brass frame and accented with solid brass filigree accents. The tray, which is removable for cleaning, features a matchbox holder and a holder for cigar or pipe. The Pipe/Cigar Stands can be custom colored and custom designed with monograms, company logos and any other style to your exact specifications.

Created with portability in mind, the Illuminated Pipe/Cigar Stand is made in the United States and features curved stained glass fired at 1,300 degrees in kilns. The entire stand is 33 inches tall; the fixture has a diameter of 10 inches; the base has a diameter of 11 inches. Suggested retail price is $450 to $550. For more information, write to Meyda Tiffany, One Meyda Fine Place, 55 Oriskany Blvd., Yorkville, NY 13495; call 800.222.4009; or fax 315.768.1428.

Kaywoodie "Gold Series"

The Kaywoodie "Gold Series" is a new offering of eight finishes produced in the bench-made tradition from "extra quality" Italian briar. Made in the United States, these pipes are hand-buffed and never lacquered for cool smoking. All feature push-bit stems of either hard rubber or lucite acrylic. There are no metal attachments or scoops in these pipes, which will appeal to the pipe smoker who prefers unobstructed, unfiltered airflow. From top to bottom, the pipes pictured here are from Elite ($50), Supreme ($45) and Sabbiata ($40) finishes. For further information, contact S.M. Frank & Co., P.O. Box 789, Peekskill, NY 10566; call 800.431.2752; or fax 914.739.3105.

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How to clean the inside of your pipe

by Rick Newcombe

Bing Crosby once said that the secret to a clean pipe is to smoke slowly. That's so true. I have test-cleaned pipes that I had smoked just the way pipes were designed: puffing slowly and rhythmically. I have cleaned other pipes that I had smoked hot: puffing and puffing, for instance, watching a very close basketball game. The pipes that I smoked slowly needed hardly any cleaning at all, while the pipes that I smoked hot were filthy inside.

A clean pipe makes all the difference in the world. I'm talking about the inside of a pipe—not the outside. Even if you spend a lot of time with your local tobacconist examining different pipes before carefully selecting one, or if you sample a number of different tobaccos to test which ones you like best—all your efforts will be undermined if you allow your pipe to become dirty. On the other hand, both your pipe and your tobaccos will be enhanced immeasurably if your pipe is kept clean.

A surprising number of experienced pipe smokers do not know how to keep their pipes clean. The problem is that they don't know what they are missing. I speak from experience. I had smoked pipes for nearly 20 years before I learned how to clean them thoroughly.

Once I realized the difference, a whole new world of taste and pleasure opened up to me. Before that, however, what I thought was a clean pipe, because I used a lot of pipe cleaners, really had a lot of built-up cake that affected the smoke. But I didn't know the difference because I hadn't learned to clean them.

My teacher was a man named Jim Benjamin, who has specialized in cleaning and restoring old pipes for more than half a century. I first read about Benjamin in *The Ultimate Pipe Book* by Richard Carleton Hacker. Whenever I buy an "estate" (euphemism for "used") pipe, I send it to Jim to be cleaned thoroughly inside and out. I wouldn't consider trying it myself.

I'm always amazed at the number of pipe collectors who think they know how to clean their pipes, when they really don't. To me, what Jim Benjamin or other similar professionals do is every bit as technical and sophisticated as making a new mouthpiece or other forms of pipe repair. Yet collectors who wouldn't know where to begin in making a new mouthpiece don't hesitate to claim that they know how to clean and restore their old pipes. They don't. I know this because I have studied a number of these so-called "clean" pipes and been astounded at how filthy they were inside. I also know it because I have bought some of these pipes that looked beautiful outside and practically gagged while trying to smoke them. But after I sent them to Benjamin, they were returned totally clean and fresh-tasting. The pipes that Benjamin sent back appeared to be bone-dry raw wood—but wood that had already been broken in by repeated smoking. Whenever I get a pipe back like that, I can really taste the tobacco.

What I am presenting here, then, is a system for keeping your new pipes clean from the day you first buy them, and a system that will work for estate pipes, but only after they have been cleaned professionally by your local tobacconist or someone with the knowledge and skill of Jim Benjamin.

You need a handful of supplies, and you can find nearly all of them at your local tobacconist. Let's start with pipe cleaners. I use three types: bristled (my preference is Long's); thin and soft, such as the yellow-packaged Dill's; and extra fluffy. If you want to use the tapered cleaners as a way to combine the thins and extra fluffy, that's fine. Other materials you'll need include Q-Tips, alcohol or pipe sweetener, paper towels and the little brushes that tobacconists sell for around $1 each. You'll also need a pipe tool with a poker, spoon and tamper, which also costs about $1. Those are the only materials you will need to keep your pipes clean and tasting fresh at all times.

American pipemaker Mike Butera says that he uses as many as eight pipe cleaners during each bowl that he smokes. That sounds like a lot, but I agree with Mike that you should use pipe cleaners frequently.

After the tobacco has turned to gray or white ash when I am finished, I use an old technique that Tim West, another American pipemaker, once taught me. I use the poker, or the straight piece of metal on the pipe tool, to make sure the ash at the bottom of the bowl is fluffy and loose so that there isn't a dottle stuck to the bottom. I then hold a paper towel, or the palm of my hand, over the top of the bowl and shake the bowl up and down to let the

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ash gently accumulate on the sides of the bowl. Then I dump out the remaining ash. After that, I run another pipe cleaner through the pipe, and then blow gently through the stem. I try not to separate the mouthpiece from the pipe for as long as possible—between five and 10 bowls. Jim Cooke, an accomplished pipe repairman and pipemaker, strongly cautions against separating the mouthpiece from the pipe, and I'm sure Cooke would say that every five to 10 bowls is still too often to be pulling them apart. But Cooke's criticism is mainly aimed at those smokers who separate the mouthpiece from the shank after every smoke.

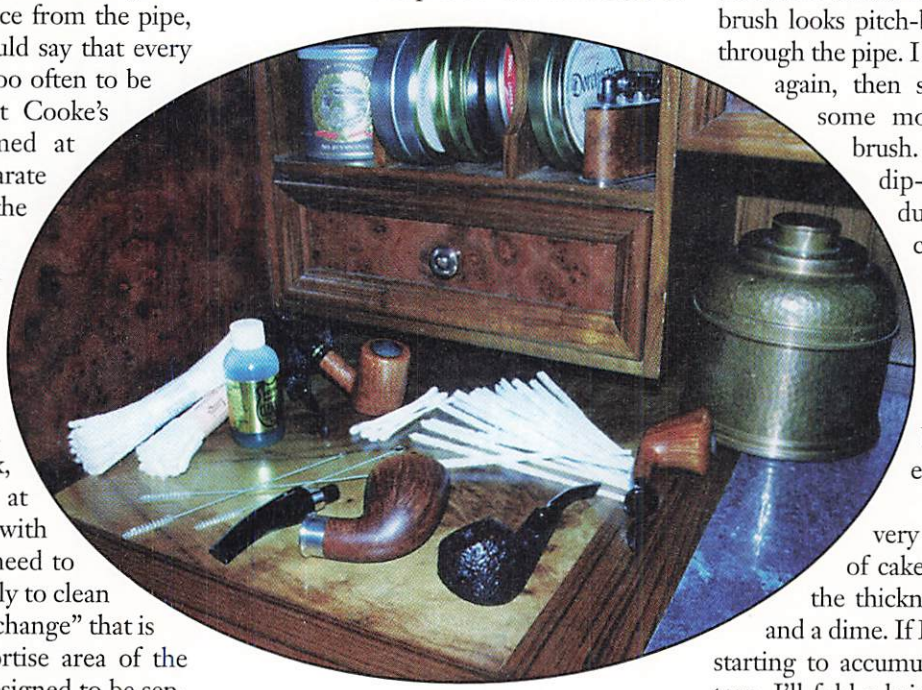
I agree with Jim Cooke that constantly pulling apart the mouthpiece will ultimately damage your pipe. It puts pressure on the wood in the shank, and on the tenon. But at the same time, I agree with Jim Benjamin that you need to separate them occasionally to clean up what he calls the "oil change" that is accumulating in the mortise area of the pipe. "If pipes weren't designed to be separated, then why did Alfred Dunhill put a white dot on the mouthpiece?" Benjamin asks rhetorically. "He did it so that pipe smokers will know which side is up when they put the mouthpiece back after having separated it from the pipe."

So let's say you have smoked your new pipe 10 times. On the 10th bowl you start to notice a slight change in the taste of the tobacco. It tastes heavier, or just a little bitter. This bitterness will acrue faster if you tend to smoke different blends in the same pipe—it's better to smoke the same blend in a particular pipe. But either way, eventually it will begin to take on a bitter flavor. To me, it tastes like black coffee that has sat in the pot all day. Once the tobacco in your new pipe tastes that way, and it's typically between the fifth and 10th bowl, it's time for a serious cleaning.

I'll spend about a half hour a week cleaning six pipes, or an average of five minutes each. I sit at a table with the following materials spread out: Six paper towels piled on top of one another; a wide-mouth jar filled with alcohol such as rum, vodka or whiskey—or pipe sweetener, if it has a high alcohol content; Q-Tips; pipe cleaners; a pipe tool; and one of those pipe-cleaning brushes that you can find at most tobacconists.

I start by separating the mouthpiece from the shank. I dip the tenon in the jar filled with alcohol, then use a paper towel to dry it off. I then dip an entire bristled cleaner in the alcohol and run it through the mouthpiece, starting at the tenon end.

The next step is to use the brush to clean the inside of the mouthpiece. Dip the brush in the alcohol, then run it through the mouthpiece, starting at the tenon hole. After scrubbing back and forth five or six times, pull out the brush and dry off the bristles, which will be brown or black, on the paper towels. Dip the brush back into the alcohol and then run it through the mouthpiece again. Do this as many times as necessary—until the brush is as clean coming out of the mouthpiece as it was going in. Then use an extra-fluffy cleaner to dry out the inside of the mouthpiece. Blow through the lip end to get rid of any pipe-cleaner fuzz.



Now you're ready to clean the pipe itself. I start with the mortise area, using a Q-Tip to wipe away any tars or other accumulated gunk. You can dip the Q-Tip in alcohol before using it to clean the mortise area, but I wouldn't do this more than once or twice. Jess Chonowitsch warns that if too much alcohol seeps into the wood, it will prevent the natural oils from coming to the surface. After using the Q-Tips, the mortise will be noticeably cleaner, which you should be able to see clearly under a light.

Next, you are ready to clean the shank. Barry Levin once told me that the key to a clean pipe is to have a clean shank. I agree. Dip the brush in alcohol and start scrubbing inside the shank, just as you did inside the mouthpiece. Use the paper towels to dry off the brush, dip it back into the alcohol, then run it back and forth in the shank. I do this procedure five or six times. Because I smoke heavy latakia blends, my brush looks pitch-black after its first time through the pipe. I dip the brush in alcohol again, then scrub inside the shank some more, then dry off the brush. After five or six of these dip-scrub-and-dry procedures, the brush starts coming out noticeably cleaner than when I started. I'll then use an extra-fluffy cleaner to dry out the inside of the shank and then blow through the shank end once or twice.

For the bowl itself, I do very little. I like a little bit of cake—somewhere between the thickness of a sheet of paper and a dime. If I notice flakes of ash are starting to accumulate in an uneven pattern, I'll fold a bristled cleaner and rub it along the inside of the bowl to even out the cake. This is a very gentle process. I never use a reamer. If a pipe needs to be reamed, I send it to a professional. Many pipe smokers think it's no big deal to ream a pipe, but in reality it explains why so many estate pipes have uneven cakes, which can easily cause the briarwood to crack.

I leave the mouthpiece separated from the shank for about five minutes to make sure the alcohol in the mortise area has dried. Then I put the pipe back together. If the tenon squeaks even slightly, I'll rub a little beeswax or soap on it and then gently connect the mouthpiece with the shank.

Then I let the pipe rest and totally dry out—for at least 24 hours, and sometimes for two or three days. The next time I smoke it, I can taste the tobacco just as if I were smoking it in a brand new clay pipe—which is precisely what most expert blenders use to test new tobacco mixtures.

So give this system a try and let me know what you think. But remember, this program applies only to your new pipes and to your professionally cleaned estate pipes. It is not to be used to clean those estate pipes in the first place. You need a professional for that because it is so much

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more complicated. In fact, even using my system, I still recommend having your pipes cleaned professionally every few years. There are several reasons for this. One is that the Q-Tips will never clean out the cake that builds up in the mortise. Another is that, while the brushes are good for cleaning the shank, they won't prevent the natural build-up of a cake that has the effect of closing the smoke hole. A real professional will be able to remove the build-up of tars in the shank.

My system of cleaning takes only about five minutes for every five to ten bowls of tobacco, which is hardly a lot. Yet that five-minute investment will give you hundreds of hours of pure pleasure, in which you enjoy every pipe bowl because you are able to experience the true taste of the tobacco just as it was meant to be tasted. *P&T*

From the desk of Jim Benjamin

Dear Rick:

You asked me for comments on your article. You may or may not agree with them, but here they are, starting with the title.

Rather than advocate procedures, which many will scoff at, it seems to me that a softer approach would be to change the title of the article to "THE REWARDS OF KEEPING YOUR PIPE CLEAN." (Sub-title: "Cultivate the Habit.")

I agree with you and Bing Crosby that pipes should be smoked slowly. The best flavor from a pipe is attained by just keeping it smoldering.

Pipe magazines are full of pictures of experts and collectors who claim advanced knowledge of Pipes-in-General. But often these "experts" are pictured smoking wonderful examples of high-grade collectible pipes that, astonishingly, have filthy, badly oxidized bits. How they can even put them in their mouths, I do not know! I sometimes wonder if they brush their teeth or change the oil in their cars! The taste they are getting is certainly not that of their tobacco, but that of the salty sulphur flavor of an oxidized bit.

A bit, to be exact and correct, should be like vitreous china: shiny and smooth, with no taste of its own.

Using many pipe cleaners during a smoke, whether you know it or not, is really not a good idea. Every time a pipe cleaner goes in and out, it deposits fuzz, which congeals with the tars. You should see what comes out of a pipe when I clean them, when lots of pipe cleaners have been used! Besides, the pipe cleaners are being utilized to absorb the moisture. That is treating the condition; it is not eliminating the cause.

If one, when he is not puffing, will put his tongue against the end of the bit and suck very slightly, the bit will be sealed off. This procedure also forces one to swallow. It becomes obvious that since you swallow, all of the saliva is eliminated. It does not get into the bit, making you a wet smoker. If you become a dry smoker, you can eliminate the need to use all of those pipe cleaners during a smoke. When I finish a smoke, all I get is a pinch of ash out of the bowl, and nothing but a very slight color on a pipe cleaner. Try it, and become a dry smoker.

I would suggest that the average person use high proof (150+) rum or brandy for cleaning their pipes.

Do not use Q-Tips. They are too soft, are not aggressive enough and can leave lint. Use a fuzzy pipe cleaner doubled over a couple of times. It's much better.

Do not use a wide-mouthed jar and do not dip the tenon into the jar. Use two small containers with screw tops (like some pills come in). One is to dip your cleaner in and the other is to rinse your brush in.

Take a box the size of a checkbook box. Leave the top on for rigidity and make two holes into which the two bottles fit tightly. This way, they will not tip over. To be super safe, put the box with the bottles in a disposable aluminum bake pan. By so doing, you will never damage your furniture tops by spilling. Also, if the brush is too tight to pass through your bit, use a stiff, scratchy pipe cleaner.

For the tenon, I'll use beeswax, paraffin wax, or graphite (from a drafting pencil)—not soap.

With a real professional cleaning, the whole pipe should come back looking like new. Cleanliness is a habit. Develop good habits and you will enjoy a better smoke. However—do not become a slave to a pipe!

These are my comments—use them, or discard them. I think that they make sense.

Best regards,

Jim Benjamin

Dear Jim:

Thank you for your comments. As always, you are insightful. Having said that, however, I still recommend Q-Tips, a wide-mouthed jar and soap on the tennon—which I learned from Ulf Noltensmeier of S. Bang. Other than these minor points, I agree with much of what you say and will continue to send you my pipes for cleaning. The fact that we don't agree 100 percent is no big deal. As they say, that's what makes horse races. It's also what makes pipe collecting so much fun!

Best regards,

Rick Newcombe

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The channel is available to anyone with Internet access. You will need a shareware program called mIRC, available by going to *http://www.mirc.co.uk*. Instructions for downloading the program are at this site. (Mac users may need to find a Mac shareware site.) Configure mIRC by clicking FILE and SETUP. Click on a DALnet server. When you get a connection, a window will open. Type in #pipes.

Capital Area Pipe Smokers (CAPS)
Based in Fairfax, Virginia, this is a long-established club with a solid membership of approximately 40 dedicated pipe smokers. The club often hosts field trips to tobacco-related sites and frequently hosts guest speakers at their meetings. Of special interest this year is the CAPS club pipe, made especially for the club by Erik Nording and embellished with the CAPS acronym. Available in smooth and carved finishes, the pipe is available to club members for $60 in a carved finish and $80 in smooth. Non-club members may purchase the pipes at $200 and $300 respectively—but since membership is only $20 per year, why not just join?

For meeting times and other information, contact George Riddle at 703.385.3033.

Carolina Briar Friars
Deep South Classic Pipe and Cigar Smokers Convention
Two-day event held at the Sheraton Airport Plaza, I-85 and Billy Graham Parkway, in Charlotte, North Carolina, on May 30 and 31, 1998. Room reservation may be made by calling the hotel at 704.392.1200. The hotel provides a complimentary shuttle service from the Char-

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International Pipe & Cigar Show

On April 18 and 19, 1998, the Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club will sponsor The International Pipe & Cigar Show

This show, with exhibitor space sold out for the second consecutive year, will feature 136 tables of collector, distributor and retailer exhibits of cigars, pipes, antiques and accessories. Expert guest speakers will present talks on tobacco and pipe-related subjects. Other scheduled activities include a Welcoming Buffet and Cocktail Party, Luncheon for Exhibitors' Wives, Hospitality Suite, Silent Auction, Saturday Night Cigar Dinner, Pipe Widow's Drawing, Special Awards and more.

Location: Ramada Inn, 17040 S. Halsted St., Harvey, Illinois.

Hours: Saturday, 10 to 5; Sunday, 9 to 3.

Hotel Reservations: (708) 596-1500

lotte Douglas International Airport.

Bill Taylor of Ashton pipes will be at the show again this year, answering questions, offering demonstrations of his craft, and making custom pipes to order. A Saturday night Down Home Fish Fry with bluegrass band (the band provides music—it's not a side dish) is just part of the friendly Southern atmosphere of this classic show. With more than 80 exhibitor tables, 1998 promises to be a big show for Charlotte.

Further information may be obtained by calling Fletch Groben at 704.523.8554.

Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club 1998 International Pipe & Cigar Show
April 18-19, 1998, at the Ramada Inn, Harvey, Illinois (708.596.1500). With 136 tables of exhibitors, collectors, and dealers in antique pipes, briar pipes, tobacciana, cigars and tobaccos, this is possibly the largest show of the year, and table space is already sold out. For more information, call Frank P. Burla at 630.434.7144 or Michael Reschke at 630.620.5033.

Christopher Morley Pipe Club of Philadelphia
Meets the third Wednesday of every month at Chris' Jazz Cafe, 1421 Sansom Street, at 7 p.m. For further information call Bob Page at 215.567.2972.

Central Oklahoma Pipe Enthusiasts (COPE)
A newly formed club for pipe smokers and collectors. For more information, write to COPE, P.O. Box 7034, Moore, OK 73153-1034; or email *jhaldeman@bix.com.*

Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers (CORPS)
Annual pipe show in Richmond, Virginia, every October. For more information, contact Linwood Hines at 804.342.0761.

Dallas/Fort Worth Pipe Smokers Club
This club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at the Londoner Tavern, 4291 Belt Line Road, Addison, Texas. Contact Ed Price, *epr065@airmail.net.*

Hudson Valley (N.Y.) Pipe Club
Formed in 1997, the Hudson Valley Pipe Club meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. Since the meetings take place at a number of different restaurants in the Mid-Hudson Valley, contact one of the following people for location and further information: Al DiFalco, 914.756.2574; Rob Denholtz, 914.462 .0751 or den@ulster.net; Steve Abrams, 914.679.8430 or *snabra@aol.com.*

Nashville Area Pipe Smokers (NAPS) Pipe Show
One-day event, to be held Aug. 8, 1998, the starting date for the RTDA (Retail Tobacco Dealers of America) trade show in Nashville. Featured will be some of the finest pipemakers in the world. Scheduled to attend are Jess Chonowitsch, Lars Ivarsson, Julius Vesz, Bill Taylor, Per Hansen and Ulf Noltensmeier of S. Bang,

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For room reservations, call the Ramada Inn, Music Valley Drive, Nashville (615.889.0800). Table reservations and additional information may be obtained by calling Keith Moore at 888.292.9576.

New York Pipe Club/Show
The New York Pipe Show is held twice a year, and the first one of 1998 will be Saturday, March 7, at the Ramada Hotel in Newark, New Jersey, just 10 minutes from the Newark International Airport. Reservations may be made by calling the hotel at 800.223.8285. The New York Pipe Club meets the first Tuesday of every month at Muldoon's Pub, 3rd Ave., between 43rd and 44th Streets, at 6 p.m. Dues: $2 per meeting. For further information contact Sailorman Jack, 212.288.3832.

The North American Society of Pipe Collectors 1998 Swap/Sell Pipe Show
Double-check your calendar, as this show has changed its date to Aug. 29, 1998, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The location remains the same however: the Holiday Inn at 328 West Lane Avenue in Columbus, Ohio.

With 150 members in 23 states and Canada, this club also publishes one of the finest newsletters you will find. For more information on the show, or for a complimentary newsletter, contact Bill Unger at 614.252.2904 or *ohio@pipes.org*.

St. Louis Pipe Club/10th Annual Gateway Area Pipe Show & Swap
A one-day annual show, this year's Gateway Area Pipe Show will be on Saturday, Feb. 7 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Harley Hotel of St. Louis in St. Louis, Missouri. Room reservations may be made by calling the hotel at 800.321.2323—mention the show for a special $69 room rate. Ask for the S.L.P.C. Room for the open house Friday afternoon and evening the day before the show.

Awards will be offered in collector and dealer categories. The show also has raffle drawings and door prizes. For further information, contact Jay Milton at 314.837.5902 (days) or 618.656.7584 (evenings); or Bob Calloway at 314. 946.8555.

Sherlock Holmes Pipe Club
Meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Massachusetts. For further information contact Steve Smith, *fourdots@ma.ultranet.com*.

South Florida Briar Brotherhood
Not only do these guys get to live in beautiful South Florida, they get to participate in a great pipe club, too. Meetings are held in the loft of Turtle Run Liquors on West Sample Road in Coral Springs, Florida, at 8 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month. *Smoke Signals*, the club's newsletter, always features interesting articles and reviews, and at $7 per year, it is a bargain. You can subscribe by contacting Ed Faerman at *Smoke Signals*, 3606 NW 84th Ave., Suite 100, Coral Springs, FL 33065, or find the club's Web page at *http://netrunner.net/family/pipe/smokesig.htm*.

Triangle Area Pipe Smokers (TAPS)
This Raleigh, North Carolina, club has just passed its first anniversary, and has increased its membership to about 40. It meets the second Thursday of every month at the Holiday Inn-Crabtree at 6:30 p.m. for sandwiches, smoke and general frivolity. Further information may be obtained by calling Chuck Stanion at 919.872.5040.

The Universal Coterie of Pipe Smokers (TUCOPS)
The Pipe Smoker's Ephemeris, which appears approximately twice a year, averages 75-100 pages and is the virtual meeting place for members of the Coterie. Now in its 34th year, and completely financed by editor Tom Dunn—with the help of contributions from appreciative readers—*The Ephemeris* is stuffed with letters, articles, Sherlockiana and reports on everything pipe-related. You may obtain a subscription form by writing to Tom Dunn, 20-37 120th Street, College Point, NY 11356.

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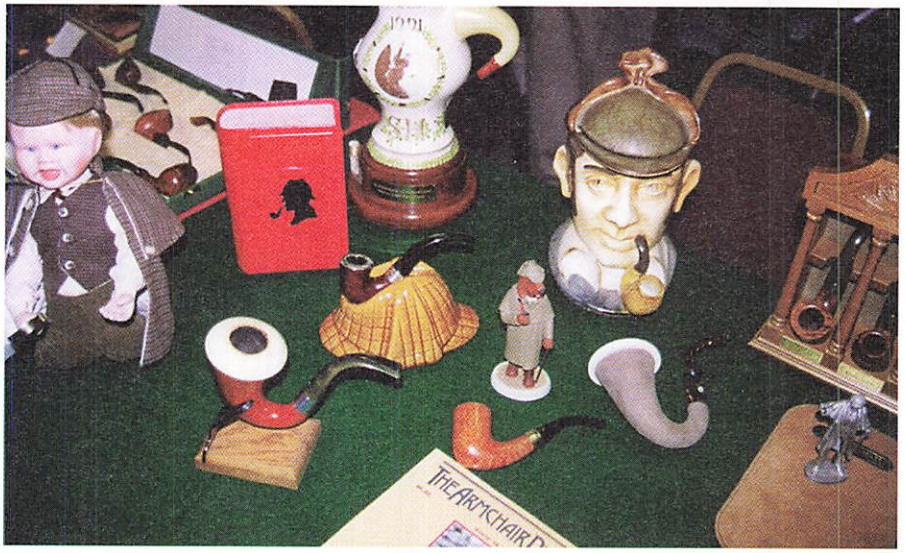
Focusing on Pipe Shows

The pipe show circuit is becoming busier as pipes grow in popularity. 1998 should be a terrific year, with more local shows springing up, and with the established shows swelling to larger and larger sizes. What does this mean to those who attend the shows? More to see, of course! But it also means: reserve early! The 1998 shows will sell out early, and the hotels hosting them will sell out early, too. So do not wait until the last minute.

How do we know this year will be so great? Because last year was great; even better than the year before. Here are some images from the shows that have been held over the last few months.

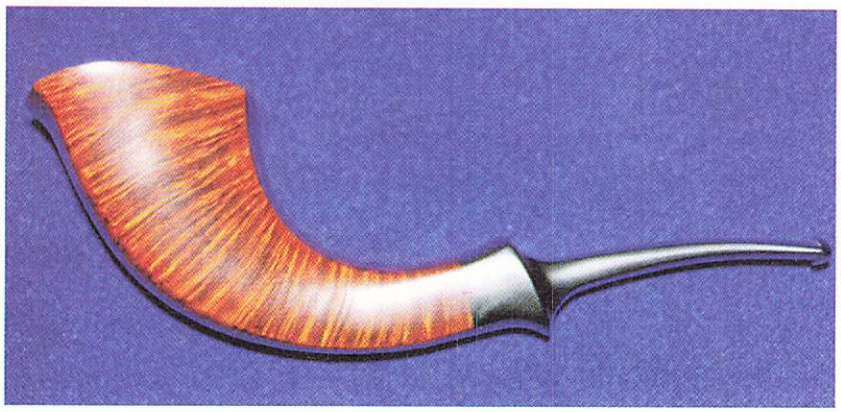


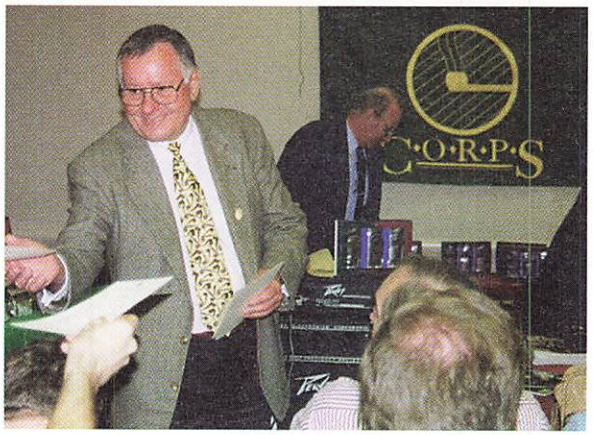
RICHMOND

The 13th Annual Pipe Smokers' Exposition and Celebration, hosted by the CORPS (Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers), was held in October 1997 and, as you might ascertain from some of these photos, had a specific theme: Sherlock Holmes. The next CORPS show will be in October 1998.

pipe by Peter Hedegaard (below left)

Peter Stokkebye (below right) distributes information for tobacco seminar.





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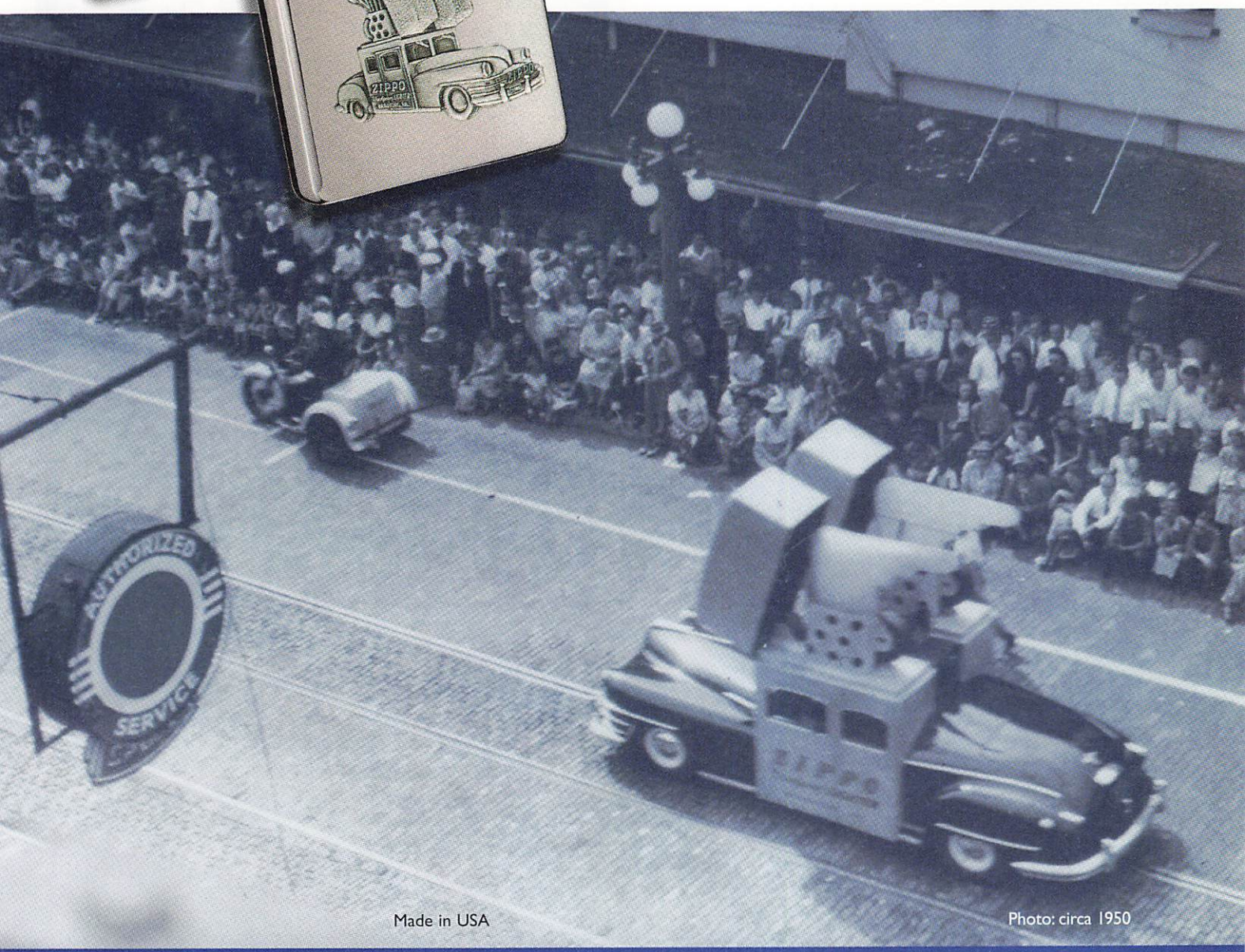

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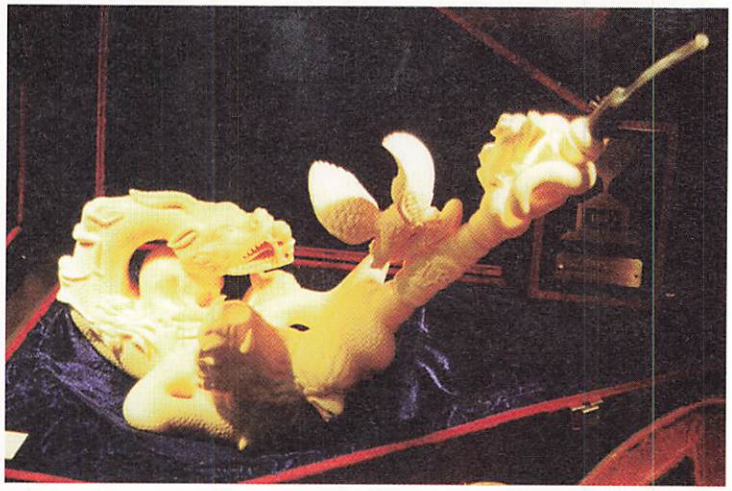


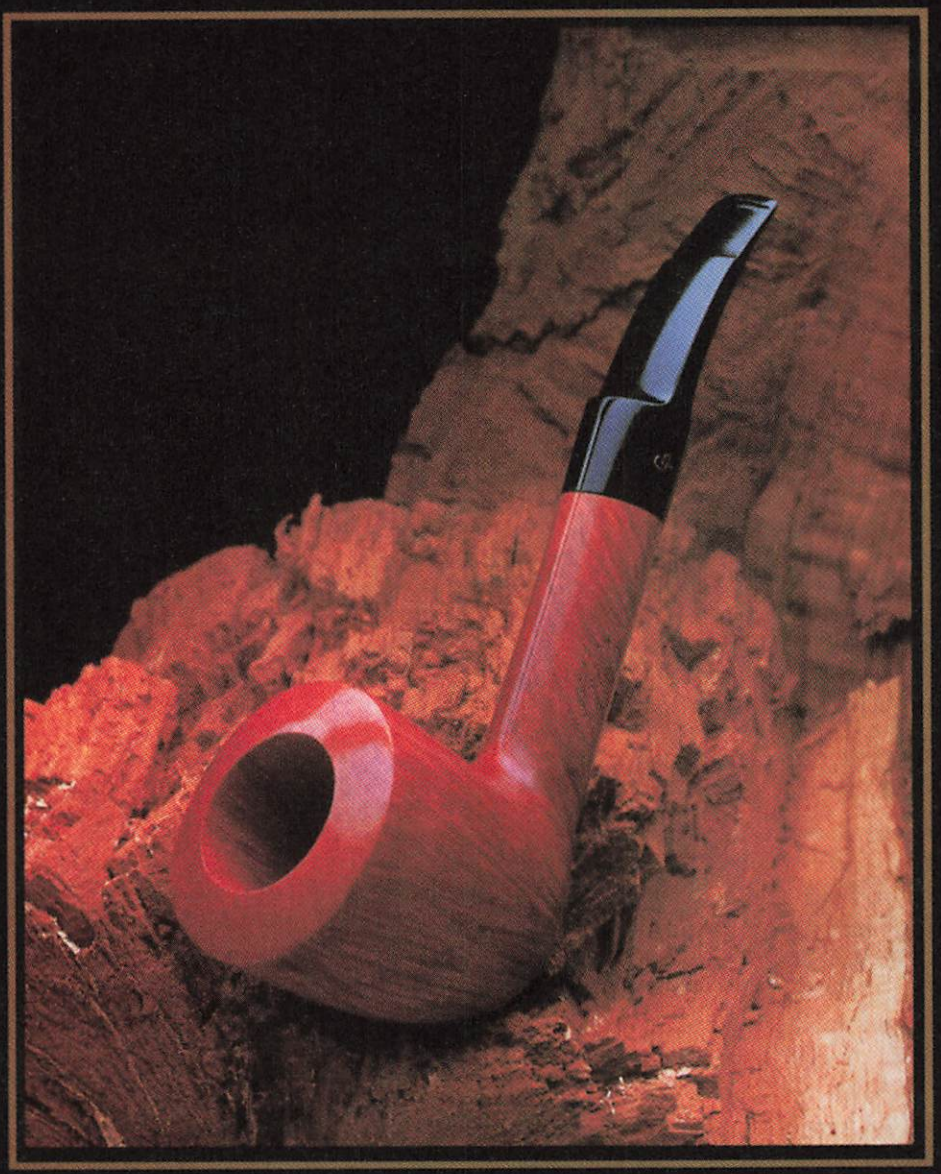
LOS ANGELES

Anaheim, California, hosted the 1997 West Coast Pipe & Cigar Expo last November. With door prizes, silent auction, smoking contest and an impressive range of exhibits, the show was a tremendous success. One memorable highlight was the Saturday night banquet, at which Mary McNiel, of McClelland Tobacco, gave an informative talk about the history of her company. The next West Coast Show is tentatively scheduled for Fall 1998.

RALEIGH

The Triangle Area Pipe Smokers Pipe and Cigar Expo, held in January 1998, provided a busy day for exhibitors. Walk-in traffic reached 250 people, and TAPS (the Triangle Area Pipe Smokers) capitalized on the great attendance by doubling membership in its club. The next Raleigh show will be in Spring 1999.

Alberto Bonfiglioli pipes →



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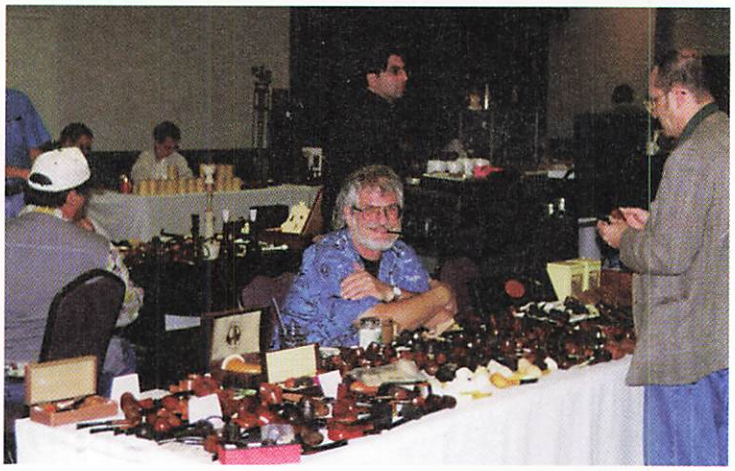
Pipes by Samuel Learned



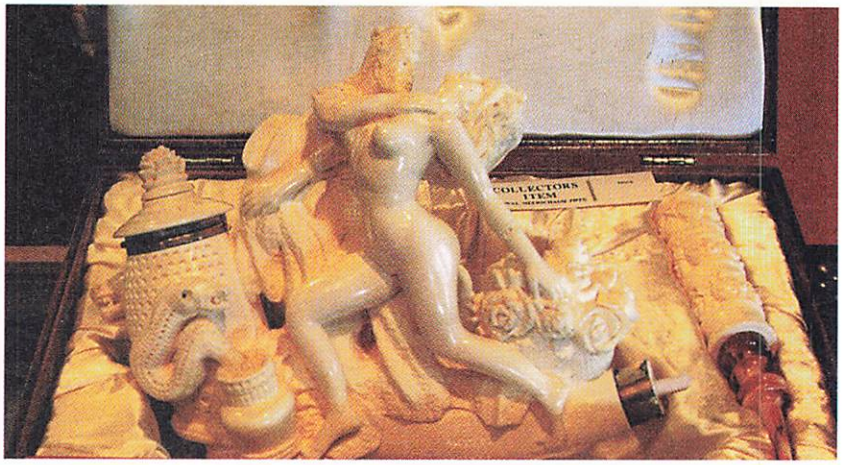
Regency pipes by David Jones

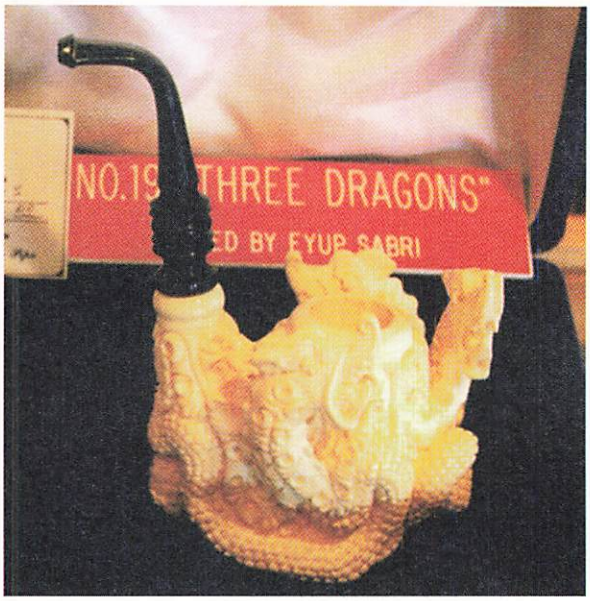
COLUMBUS

The North American Society of Pipe Collectors Swap/Sell Pipe Show, held in Ohio last September, was the most successful Columbus show yet, and helped the club break the 300 mark in its membership drive. The next show, scheduled for August 1998, promises to be even better.

ST. LOUIS

The 49th Annual Convention of the International Association of Pipe Smokers' Clubs, held in November 1997, featured its annual World Champion Pipe Smoking Contest as well as a Pipe Collectors' Show. The winning time in the smoking contest was 100 minutes 43 seconds, by Coy Howard. St. Louis will host another pipe show in February 1998: The 10th Annual Gateway Area Pipe Show & Swap.





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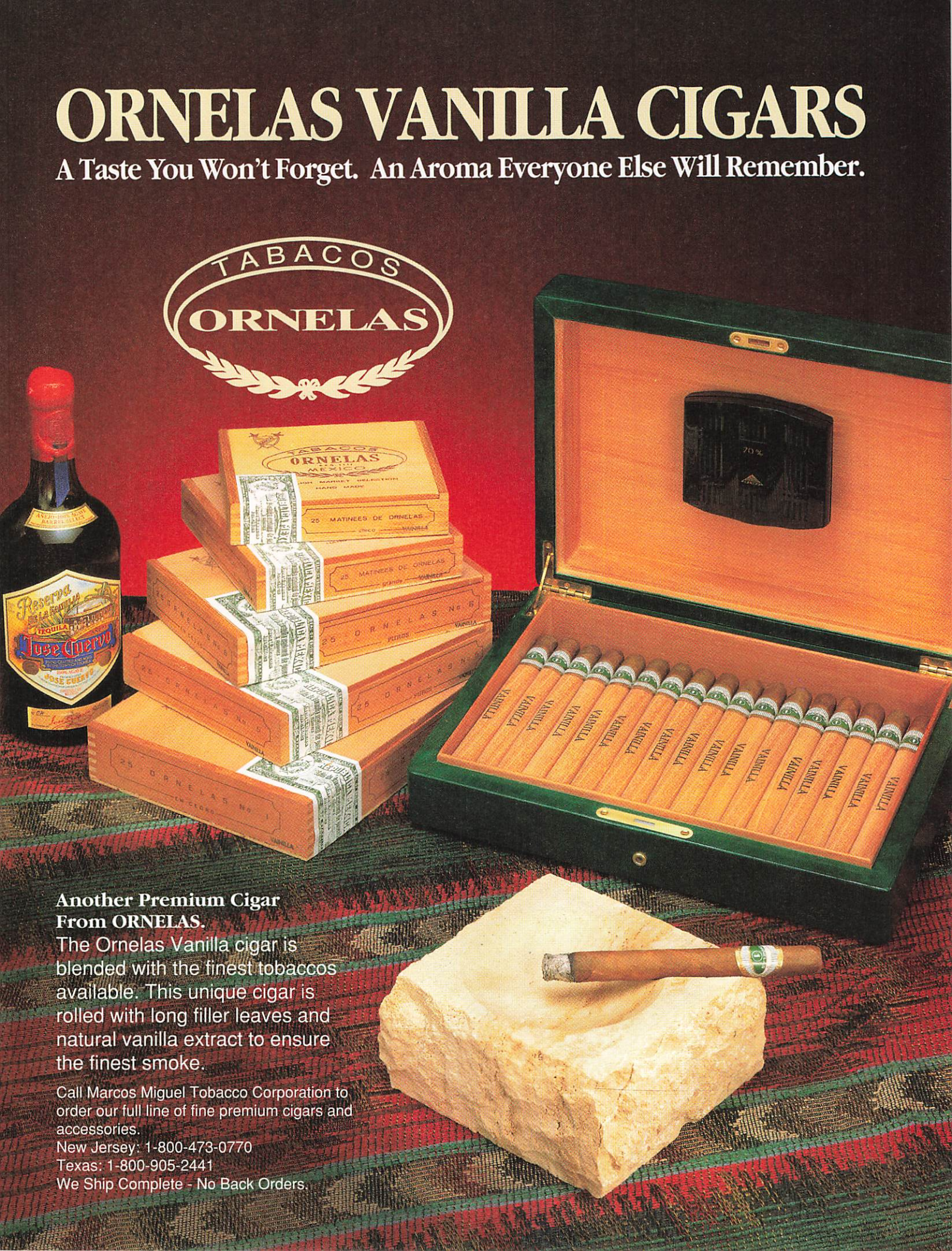

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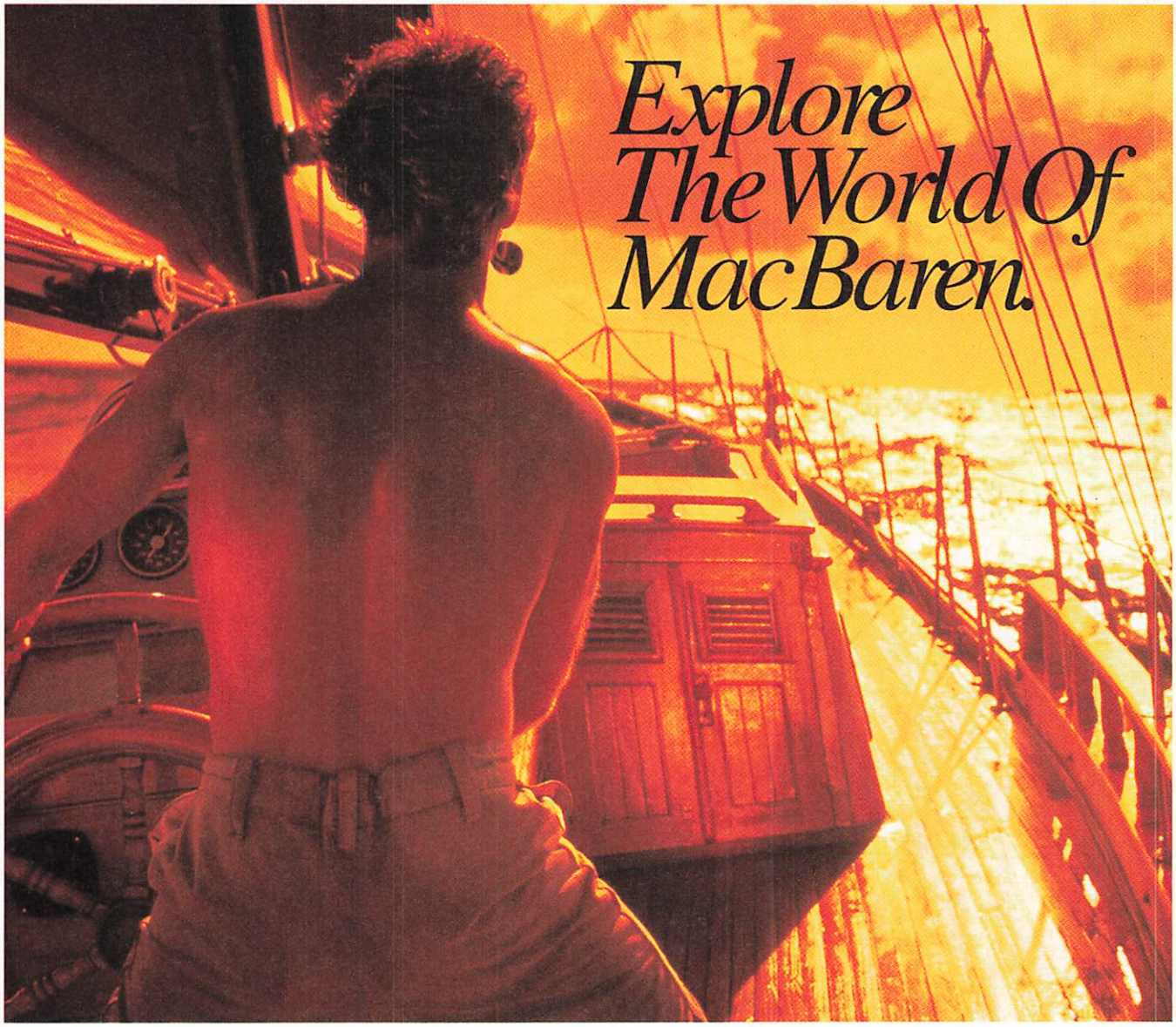

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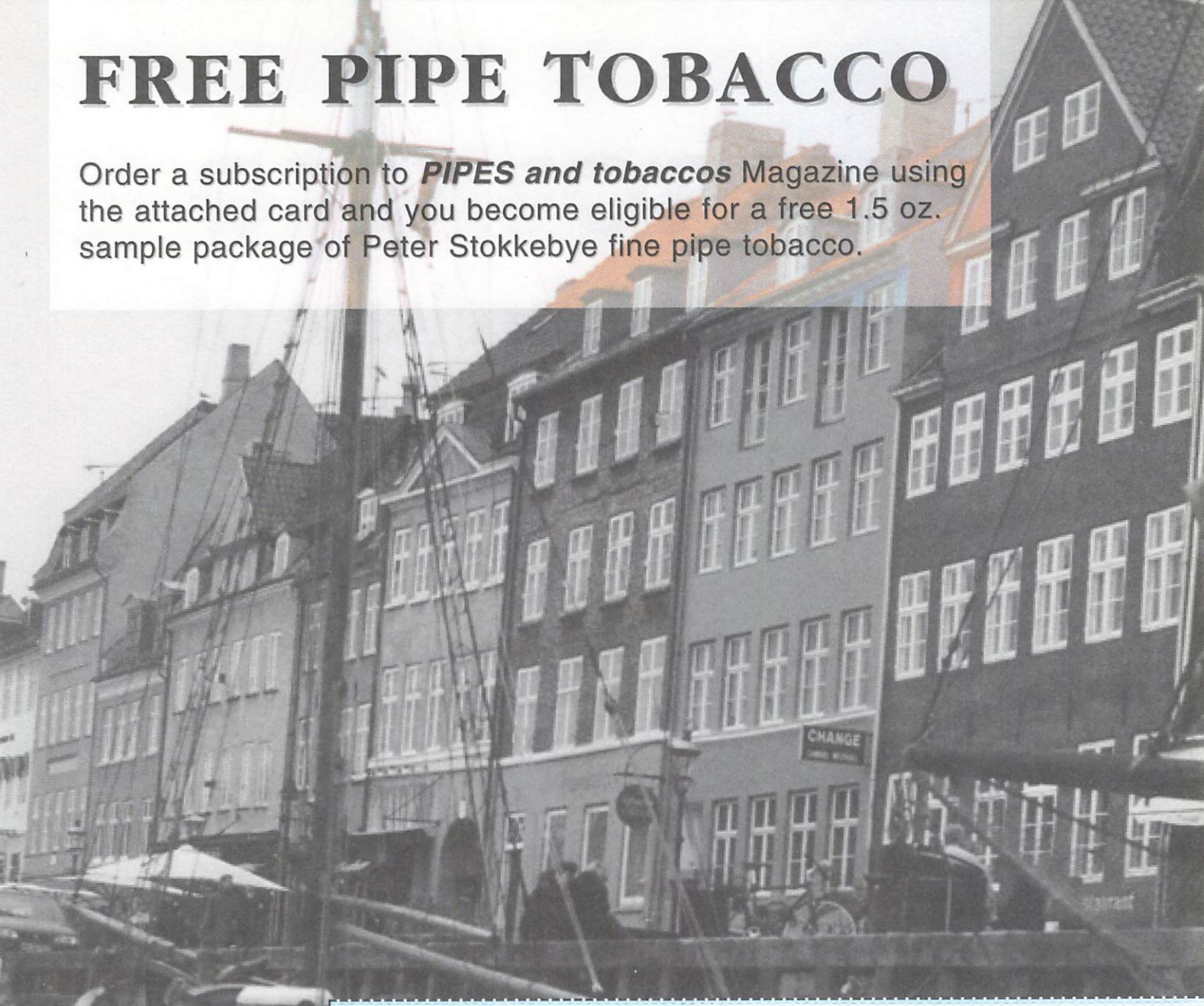

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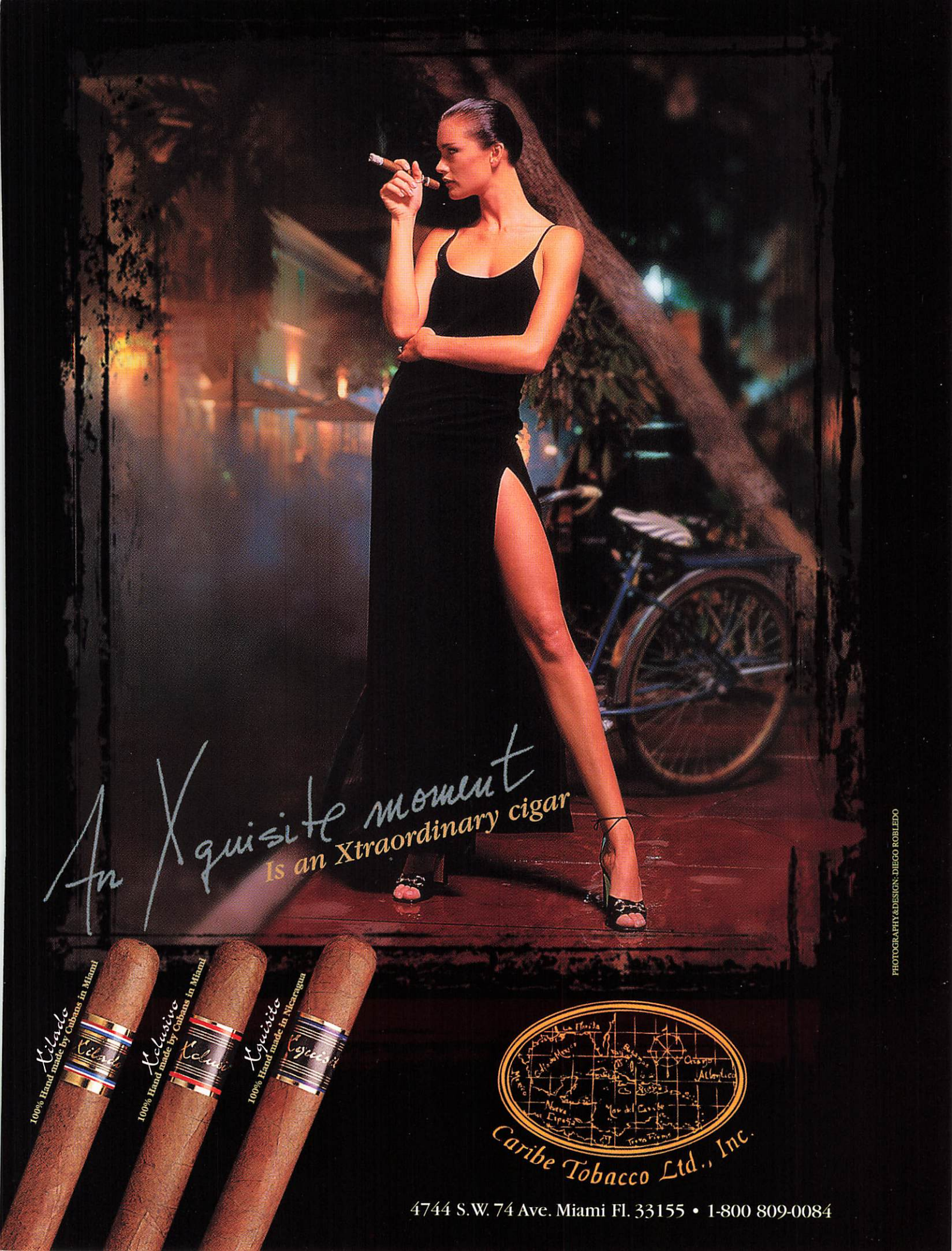
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